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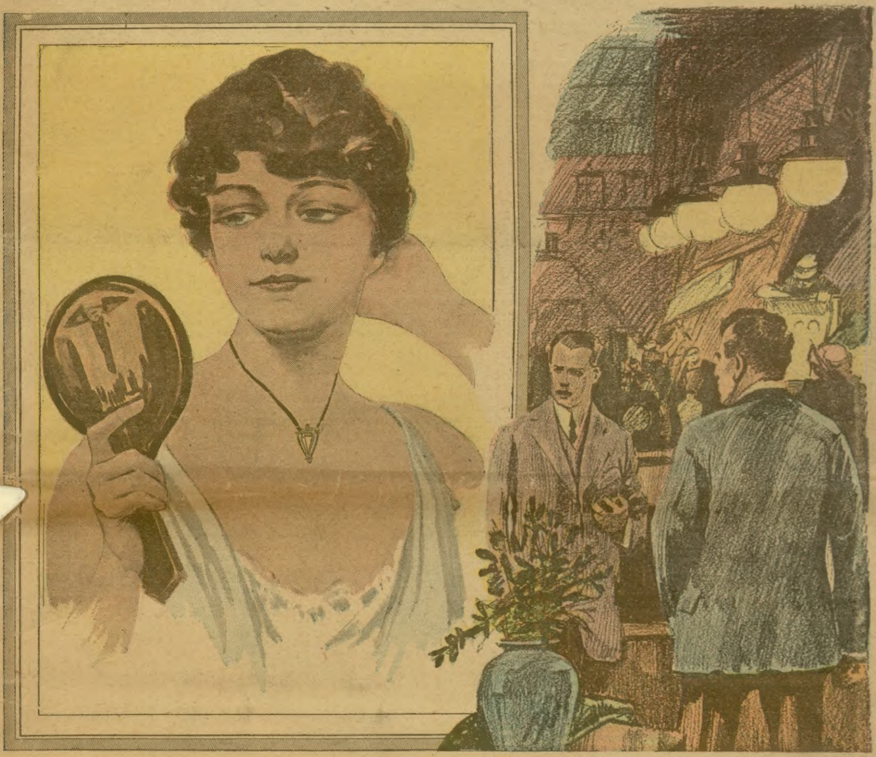

A Movie Detective

:-: Or, :-:

The Press-Agented Gem

By Lloyd Thacher

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CHAPTER I.

EVEN under the ghastly light of the moving-picture studio she was beautiful. Seated on a richly upholstered sofa, dressed in a gorgeous evening gown, she did not need the jewels on her hands and at her throat to bring the focus of all eyes upon her.

And Helen Hayden's smile was calculated to disarm the most jealous of professional rivals. That smile was now shining for the benefit of the perplexed director, who was trying to remain calm while he attempted to make several "extra" men and women understand just what they should do in the scene of which a picture was about to be taken.

"You see that wonderful gem at Miss Hayden's throat," the director was saying to them. "Well, that gem is supposed to be worth a fortune."

The superintendent of the plant, standing back of the camera with a friend, spoke in a whisper. "And it is worth a fortune, too," he said.

"And," continued the director, "you are all supposed to be interested in it."

It was easy enough for the "supers" to act this part of the picture, for they, as well as all the rest of the world, had read and heard of the fabulous sum which the noted actress had paid for the gleaming thing now glistening against the snowy white of her throat.

"And you, Grant," the director went on, "are a broken-down society man who has come to the end of his rope. You intend to get that jewel and sell it. Not one of the rest of you people has any suspicions that Grant is anything but all right. But you've got to show your interest in the jewel, and yet see Grant so that you'll remember that he was there at this moment of the story. Now, see if you all can't forget everything except your interest in the thing which you're seeing for the first time."

The "set" was a handsomely-furnished room in a mansion where a ball was supposedly being given by Miss Hayden's mother. The fact that just beyond the camera's vision the exterior of a prison cell was visible, ready to receive the villain in another picture that was to be taken, was not supposed to affect the participants in this scene. And it did not. They were thinking, rather, most of them, whether they would get thru with the ball scenes that afternoon, or whether the same "set" would be used on the morrow, so that they could get in two days' work instead of one.

Most of the faces looked far from beautiful in the weird light, and hands, free from the yellow grease-paint and powder which causes the skin to "take" white on the screen, gave the appearance of having been dipped in some pale greenish liquid.

"Now, ready, we'll go thru it once, then take the picture," muttered the director. "Register interest, all of you. Now, Grant, show something of your cupidity."

There was a moment of silence while the men and women did their best to please this great man of movie land.

"All right!" cried the director. "We're off."

The camera man began his grinding, and under the lights, hot and uncomfortable, some trembling in their anxiety to "make a hit," the inexperienced actors registered, with varying degrees of success, the interest they were supposed to take in the gem which fitted so perfectly into its beautiful background.

Grant Grange, clever actor, barely indicated his desire to gain possession of the valuable jewel, then smiled and joined with the rest in an expression of polite interest.

Miss Hayden, smiling for the benefit of future spectators now, touched lightly the sparkling object, nodded her head, and, in her character of heiress to millions, spoke to her mother's guests.

"Perhaps it was foolish," she said brightly, "but the moment I saw the thing I coveted it."

"Go on talking, please," cried the director. "I want to have everybody in the house get a good look at the jewel—it'll be advertised a lot."

"So," continued the star, without changing her position of looking in the direction of the commander of affairs, "I worked hard to convince my mother that she should get it for me. I'm glad you all like it. It is beautiful."

"All right. Cut!" commanded the director. "How much was that?" he turned to the camera man.

"Fifty feet," was the reply.

"Good. S'enough." The "extra" people stood about waiting to see whether they were thru for the day, while Miss Hayden and Grant Grange spoke in low voices.

Superintendent Bray sauntered away with his friend. "That jewel," he said, "is worth three times its cost, to us. *Hayden herself is attractive enough, and in my opinion the cleverest woman* before the camera today, but the gem doubles her drawing power. You've heard its history, of course?"

"Something of it," responded Bray's friend. "How much truth is there in the stories that the thing has been stolen several times?"

"True as gospel," returned Superintendent Bray. "Three distinct times the gem has been stolen, but has been recovered on each occasion."

"Three times since Miss Hayden bought it?" inquired the other.

"No. Before she got hold of it."

"Then is was a much-advertised jewel when she bought it," laughed the friend. "Probably that was the reason she was so anxious to have it."

"No," objected Bray, "she does not need that sort of advertising. She is great enough herself to get on without any of that press-agent stuff."

"Nevertheless, I bet you people use it every time she appears in a picture wearing the gem. 'See the much-stolen jewel on the fair form of the fairest actress in moviedom,' or words to that effect," remarked Bray's friend, with just a trace of a sneer.

"Of course we have to take advantage of all the publicity available," returned the superintendent. "That's only good business."

They reached a dark corner of the studio, and now from behind them came a strange-looking man. How long he had been listening to their conversation, neither knew. In fact, they scarcely noticed him, accustomed as they were to seeking all sorts and conditions of men and women, parading about the plant in all sorts and conditions of make-up. But this fellow was noticeable even in these surroundings.

At first one would swear that the beard he wore was natural, so perfectly was it fitted to his face. And the dark eyebrows disclosed no imperfections. His shabby clothes were no fake, and he wore them as tho he were accustomed to none better. There was something about him, however, that would cause one to look twice, not knowing just why he especially attracted attention.

And this was the case with Bray and his friend. He had passed them with a muttered, "Pardon me," when Bray pointed in the direction of his retreating form.

"Notice that chap?" he said.

"One of your stock company?" queried the other.

"Not a bit of it," returned Bray. "He's only an 'extra'—the name we give men and women and girls who come here and wait about in hopes of getting a day's work. We use them when we can and pay for them every day they are in a picture—and mighty glad they are to get a day's work these times when the business is so crowded with applicants who are willing to work for nothing if only they can get in the pictures."

"Bad as that, is it?" remarked Bray's friend.

"I tell you, Bill," continued Bray, "we've had women come and offer to pay us if we would only let them act."

"What is there remarkable about that chap that's just passed us?" asked Bill, showing his disgust for people who were so taken up with the latest craze.

"Only this," continued Bray. "He came here a week ago wearing about the kind of beard he now has on, only it was natural. He asked for work in the pictures, and Smithers, who has charge of the extra people, told him that he couldn't get much work wearing a beard like that. Of course he could use him once in a while in mob scenes, but that would be about all."

"What did the fellow do?"

"He went away and came back the next day wearing the beard he now has on," returned Bray, "and went up to Smithers and told him that he had shaved his own beard, and was wearing a false one, so he could appear clean-shaven whenever that was required. Smithers laughed and has been giving him work whenever he could."

"Nothing very remarkable about that," retorted Bill. "He probably needs the money."

"But," resumed Bray, "the strange part of it is that he appears out in the yard, where the extra people wait till they are wanted, wearing a different make-up every day. He seems to have an unlimited wardrobe, and the way he can make himself up is a caution. But we don't know whether he can act any or not. We'll have to try him out with a good part some day. But I've been so busy that I haven't had time to talk with Smithers much about him."

The person of whom they were speaking had executed a peculiar move after passing the two men. Just ahead of him was a great pile of scenery used in various "sets" in the studio. The moment he was out of their sight the man slipped behind this obstruction, raised his hand to his face, and pulled off much of the hair that covered the square jaw. His coat he turned inside out, changing it from a dark blue to a light grey. He took a hat from the pocket of his trousers, and this he pulled down over his forehead.

It was late in the afternoon, and few persons were about. When he stepped from behind the pile of scenery and followed Bray and his friend, it would have required rather a close examination to disclose the fact that he was the same person. At any rate Bray and Bill did not appear to have any idea that such was the case, for they gave him but a glance when he again passed them, this time walking slowly as tho lost in thought.

"Some stranger," muttered Bray, as he made room for the fellow. "They come here so fast that I can't keep track of them."

On up the stairs they passed, but the stranger kept close to them. Their talk seemed to interest him, and not a word that they said was missed. Was it possible that, in his former character, he had been listening also, and that this change was made to avoid the suspicion which his former appearance might have aroused in their minds.

And back in the studio the director was speaking to the extra people and to Miss Hayden and Grant Grange.

"I guess that'll be all for today," he was saying. "Nine o'clock tomorrow morning. Same make-up, everybody!"

The extras hurried away to cold-cream their faces and change their costumes, in order that they might be on hand to get the checks for the day's work.

Miss Hayden and Grange, however, members of the stock company who did not have to worry about their pay—or who did not need it immediately—walked leisurely from the studio.

"No, Grant," the woman was saying. "I don't like to have you talk this way in this place. You are worse than a kid. The idea of making real love when your face is all yellow grease paint."

"But it's about the only chance I get to see you," returned Grange. "You won't ever let me come and have a good talk with you at your apartment."

"Perhaps," returned Miss Hayden, "if I didn't hear so much trash from you here, I'd be more ready to let you come and see me."

"When?" cried the man eagerly. "Can I come tonight?"

She shook her head smilingly. "I'm all tired out today," she replied. "Try and see how good you can be tomorrow, and perhaps I'll consider your matter. There is something about you, Grant," she went on seriously, looking him squarely in the face, "that I can't understand. I—I'll have to think about something—I——"

Her hand went instinctively to her throat where the jewel gleamed in the light of the setting sun streaming thru an open door.

"If you only knew," mused Grange aloud, "how much I'd do for you."

"Sh-h!" cautioned Helen Hayden. "No more of that talk tonight, please!" Her hand dropped to her side, and again the sun caught the glow of the gem.

And from the yard outside, half hidden by a scenery covered truck, there came a human glow. A queerly made-up man's eyes were fixed upon the precious stone gleaming against the white throat of the girl.

CHAPTER II.

LEADING to the dressing-rooms above was a long, narrow staircase, and toward this Helen Hayden, followed by Grant Grange, passed slowly.

And but a little distance behind came the man to whom Bray had called the attention of his friend. Tho no observer would have been able to say that the fellow sought to escape observation, nevertheless it was the fact that he made absolutely no noise as he crossed the room behind the others, and it was a strange coincidence that he so arranged matters that some theatrical bit of "prop" furniture was always between him and the man and woman just ahead.

As she reached the stairway Helen stepped back and allowed Grange to pass her.

"Go first," she said. "I always have trouble with this long skirt."

Bowing gracefully the man passed on, and as he started upward the tail of the long dress coat he was wearing caught on the hand-rail of the stairs.

Quickly and gracefully—a characteristic that marked her every movement—Helen leaned forward, and, after just a trace of difficulty with the garment, freed the coat and touched Grange playfully on the shoulder.

"Now," she laughed, "don't say that I never did anything for you. See my inclination toward the 'helping hand.'"

"I shall never wear this coat," replied the man, "without remembering that you touched it."

"I've never seen you wear it before," returned the girl. "It comes from the 'prop' wardrobe doesn't it?"

"No," he responded, "it belongs to me, but it is seldom that I play a character that calls for an outfit like this."

Indeed the coat was a remarkable one. Cut long in the skirt, it was made of dark blue cloth, a wide velvet collar giving the garment a decidely "loud" appearance for a dress coat.

"Of course," he added, "the suit takes black in the pictures but the cut of the thing gives me the 'willies.'"

BE SURE and read "A MOVIE DETECTIVE; or, THE PRESS-AGENTED GEM," in this issue. It is a fascinating and peculiar story along new lines. Look out next week for "HIS STRANGE REVENGE," a big short story, and a highly interesting story for boys, entitled, "CAPTAIN KIDD'S TREASURE; or, THE MYSTERY OF SHELTER COVE," by Captain Jack Judson. Our young boy readers will find it a corker. The stories we will give you during 1916, if put in book form, would cost you at least fifty dollars. They cost you only $1.00 in the Ledger. "A word to the wise is sufficient."

They passed on up the stairs, and the queer-looking man, having heard the conversation, his eyes never having left the pair, also mounted to the floor above. The room where he, together with the other "extra" men dressed was downstairs, but as Smithers' office was on the floor above, there was nothing out of the way in his going there. Smithers gave out the checks that called for a day's pay, and as there was one coming to this man, he had a good excuse for following Miss Hayden and her companion. The stranger it was, therefore, that he took such pains to avoid being seen by them.

The hall on the floor above was full of people, most of whom were waiting to see Smithers. Miss Hayden, however, stopped in her dressing-room, while Grant Grange passed down a long hall in the other direction toward the little room where he donned his picture raiment.

The queer-looking man halted just before he reached the top of the stairs at a place where he found himself quite unobserved. He watched Helen Hayden for a moment as she disappeared into her room, then his eyes turned in the direction taken by Grant Grange. If one had been close enough to hear the words that came whispered thru his lips, one would have heard:

"Well, that beats all!"

And it was rather strange that this man, to whom a check was coming for work done in the pictures that day, did not go at once and join the crowd about the door to Smithers' office to wait his turn to get the little slip of paper that would call for a certain sum of money.

Presently Grant Grange came back up the hall and knocked at the door of Miss Hayden's dressing-room. It opened just a crack, and the beautiful face of the girl appeared in the opening. Then the man stepped just inside, his back still visible from the hall.

Evidently serious, low-spoken words passed between the two, but in a moment Grange left her, the door closed, and Grant disappeared down the long hall.

Five, ten, fifteen minutes passed, while the queer-looking man retained his position on the stairs. Now Miss Hayden came thru the door, and, hurrying, passed down the hall, thru the waiting crowd which parted to make way for the star, and into Smithers' office.

The man on the stairway gl[illegible] quickly toward the door thru [illegible] she had disappeared, saw that no one was looking in his direction, and, with movements that were catlike, crossed the hall and passed into the dressing-room of Helen Hayden, empty now.

It was but a moment before he reappeared; nor did he make his daily visit to the office of Smithers. He darted across the hall once more, glancing over his shoulder to see that he was unobserved, then down the flight of stairs and thru the studio. Down another stairway he moved and turned into a large dressing-room. No one was there.

He fitted a key to a "make-up box," opened it, and began to remove the beard from his face. A liberal supply of cold cream, a hasty rub with a towel, and his face was free from the paint that had disfigured it. And it was but the work of a few seconds to remove and throw onto a hook the old clothes he wore. From a small trunk he took a fashionable business suit, donned it hurriedly, and passed again thru the studio, careful to avoid the few persons he met. Then down the alley that led to the street he almost ran, but the street once reached, his manner became leisurely as he strolled in the direction of the elevated road.

Meanwhile, upstairs, Grant Grange was making a slow toilet. No haste was evident in his movements, but a strange expression was discernible in his eyes, and occasionally his lips would move as tho he were talking to a presence invisible to others, yet quite tangible to the eye of his mind.

"Of course I'll do it," the lips formed the words. "She does not know to what lengths I'd go."

Carefully he tied his cravat, taking the pains that made him remarkable for the perfection of his attire.

And now, from the farther end of the hallway where was situated the dressing-room of Helen Hayden, star extraordinary of the movies, came jumbled sounds. At first it seemed to the actor taking such care that the tie about his neck was exactly in place, that a mob was forming, its rumbling mutterings growling thru the deserted place like the threats of a coming storm.

Then the noise grew more distinct. He heard voices, some shrill, some deep, uttering words of consternation.

Throwing on his coat, Grange passed out and in the direction of Smithers' office, just beyond Miss Hayden's dressing-room. There before him he saw a crowd gathered about the door of Helen's room.

Quickly he joined it, pushing his way thru and close to the entrance. Here stood Helen Hayden, her keen eyes scanning the faces before her, while men and women alike uttered excited exclamations.

"It was here but five minutes ago," Miss Hayden was saying, "and now it is gone! One of you must have it! Don't try to get away if you don't want suspicion to be directed against you!"

Smithers, called previously, came running up and, like Grange, elbowed his way thru the crowd.

"Yes, Miss Hayden," he shouted above the muttered words of the others, "I have telephoned to the police!" Then, turning and facing the "extra" men and women, and the members of the stock company of which the crowd was composed, he spoke loudly and with conviction. "I am watching all of you!" he cried. "If any person, man or woman, leaves this hall, I shall have him followed and arrested. Some one connected with this place has stolen the jewel belonging to Miss Hayden, and I am going to find out who that some one is."

Down the hall came Superintendent Bray, followed by his friend. A few words of explanation informed him of the situation, and his expressive face assumed a determined look.

"The police are coming," he said, "and it is useless for anybody to try to get away with Miss Hayden's gem. It will save a great deal of trouble if whoever has it will give it up now. It is useless for the thief to try to get away with it. I shall have everybody searched, 'extra' and star alike. I hate to accuse any one, but this is too serious a matter to take any chances on. Everybody stay where you are."

He spoke a few words to Smithers, who promptly took his place by the stairway whence he could watch that exit. Then Bray's friend, at instructions from the superintendent moved to the other end of the hall and remained standing there. No one could leave the place without one of these men seeing him.

Now Bray went to the telephone, gave a number, and in a moment was in communication with some one at the other end of the wire.

"Ten minutes," he said. "All right, everything will be just as it is now. Come as fast as you can. It's the celebrated jewel of which you have heard. Come, and I'll tell you all about it when you get here."

Back in Miss Hayden's dressing-room the girl was moving about restlessly. Mr. Bray, having finished speaking, turned to her to meet the anxiety in her eyes.

"I wouldn't have had it happen for anything in the world," she said quietly. "People will say that I am anxious for the advertising that another theft of the gem would bring."

"No one who has ever seen you on the screen will say that," consoled Bray. "You don't need advertising of that sort."

"If my drawing power rested on anything as cheap as a much-stolen jewel," replied Helen, "I would get out of the moving-picture business. I hope that I have a more stable popularity than one resting on anything as uncertain as that!"

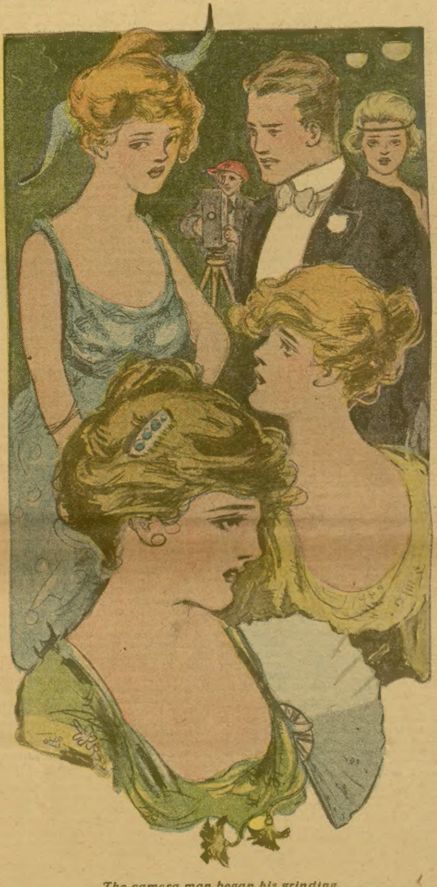
"We will get the jewel back, never fear," returned Bray. "I have sent for a friend of mine, the brightest fellow I know, who makes a hobby of this sort of thing. And it will give him the greatest sort of pleasure to find the jewel for you. Now, tell me how it happened."

"There is nothing much to tell," replied the girl. "I came up from the studio with Mr. Grange, wearing the jewel. My maid was not here. After a bit I thought of something I wanted to speak to Mr. Smithers about, and I went into his office to see him, fearing that if I waited he might leave before I was ready for the street."

"You left the gem here?" queried Bray.

"The most careless thing I ever did," was the chagrined reply. "I had taken it off and laid it in front of my mirror. Forgot about it completely for the moment, and left the room. I wasn't gone more than five minutes, I don't believe. I hurried back, as I had suddenly remembered that I had left the gem in plain sight of any one who might look into this room. And when I got back—it was gone."

"Don't worry about it," said Bray. "You'll have it back before tomorrow night, or I miss my guess. Er—by the way," he added, his business sense taking a hand in the situation, "you don't mind if I telephone to the papers, do you? I'm as sorry as any one can be about the loss of the gem, but we might just as well get what good we can out of it. Everybody who goes to the pictures is interested in everything that concerns you, and everybody knows about the jewel and its history. So we might just as well get the benefit of the advertising. It will make a good story."



The camera man began his grinding.

The girl thought a minute.

"Don't you suppose that it will make the detective's work harder to have the papers get hold of it?" she asked at last.

"Not a bit of it," responded Bray. "He's not like most detectives. Nothing can make his work hard."

"I suppose you might just as well do as you wish," said Miss Hayden.

"Besides," exclaimed Bray, as tho the thought had just struck him, "the picture in which you wear the jewel will be released before long, and people will want to see it on your neck. It will make the picture all the more of a drawing card. And," he glanced about to see that no one was within hearing distance, "you know that the 'powers that be' are considering your salary for next year. A bit of advertising, little as you need it, may make a difference of several thousands to you."

Helen smiled a bit wearily. "Go ahead, do as you think best," she said.

Bray left her to go to the telephone again, and at the same instant Grant Grange, who had been standing in the doorway, came close to her.

"You know that you can command me and I will be only too glad to do anything to help you find the jewel," he said.

"I am not sure," replied the girl, slowly, her voice so clear and bell-like that it was heard by some of those standing in the hall just outside her door. "I am not sure that I trust you, Grant Grange."

CHAPTER III.

IT WAS just as Superintendent Bray had finished talking to the various newspapers, that a distinguished-looking gentleman strolled down the hall toward the excited crowd about the door of Helen Hayden's dressing-room. And as soon as Bray caught sight of him he rushed forward and grasped the newcomer by the hand.

"Prompt as usual, Syde," he exclaimed in a stage whisper. "Come in and meet Miss Hayden, and she will tell you all about it."

Ti Syde (no one of his acquaintances seemed to know where he had picked up a name that did not seem to fit him at all) was tall, extremely broad of shoulder, and, dressed as he was this day in the smartest of walking suits, gave the appearance of much "ready money." One would be unable to tell within ten years of his age, but the main thing that impressed a person meeting him for the first time, was the look of dependability and intelligence which characterized his face. And with it all there was not the slightest trace of self-satisfaction in his bearing.

"I shall be delighted to meet the lady whom I have seen on the screen so many times," was the man's response.

"Gangway, please," exclaimed Mr. Bray as they neared the expectant crowd.

"And what are all these people doing here?" smiled Syde. "I should think that they would be in the way—would interfere with the orderly transaction of your business."

Bray whispered to Syde. He was rather proud of his foresight in not allowing any one to leave the plant without being searched and questioned by the detective.

"Not a soul has got away," he murmured into Syde's ear. "One of these people must have the gem. I am keeping them here for you to question and to have them searched."

"My dear Mr. Bray," returned Syde, quickly, "pray do not keep them here on my account. I shall ask them no questions, and it would be but a waste of time to have them searched."

"But," stammered Bray, "you haven't heard the circumstances connected with the theft. And surely you want to ask them questions?"

"I am ashamed to say," replied Ti, "that I am not very well posted in detective fiction. Perhaps that would be the orthodox manner of beginning an investigation of this kind. But it does not happen to be my way. I have a decided prejudice against starting out with some wrong idea in my head. People are good actors—especially those who make acting a profession, as I judge these people do. So what would be the use of my asking a lot of questions in order to give them an opportunity to show just how good actors they are."

"But surely you," interrupted Bray, "with your reputation, would be able to judge whether they were telling the truth or not. You would be able to judge their faces and, perhaps, fasten suspicion on the thief."

"More likely, being human, I would get a prejudice against some one, and waste a lot of time following that suspicion to a most unsatisfactory finish." And Ti moved on toward the door.

"But surely you want them searched before I let them go?" almost pleaded Bray.

Ti Syde smiled almost imperceptibly. "Do you imagine, Mr. Bray," he said, "that any one who stole a gem as valuable as that one is reputed to be would keep it on his or her person? Do you suppose that searching would do the slightest bit of good?"

Bray showed his consternation "Then how are you going to find the jewel?" he cried. "I pin my faith on you absolutely."

"As I said," resumed Ti, halting just outside Miss Hayden's door, "people are fine actors, but lifeless facts, and inanimate things and circumstances cannot act—cannot lie. There are the facts. They tell the truth, and it rests with our human intelligence to interpret those facts rightly. If one is able to do that, one ought to be able to solve any mystery. And it is on facts and situations and circumstances that I rely to help me straighten things out. It may be a wrong way to do things, Mr. Bray—we are all human and likely to err—but it happens to be my way, and—well, I think that it is a pretty good one. So please don't keep these people on my account. Of course, you may have them searched if it would make you more comfortable, but I would ask you not to tell me of any suspicions which such searching or questioning arouses in you. Now, I am very anxious to meet Miss Hayden."

Bray paused a moment, then led the way into the dressing-room of the girl. After introducing Ti Syde to the star, he added:

"Mr. Syde does this sort of thing as a hobby, Miss Hayden, and we are very lucky to be able to get him to work on this matter. He really does not need to work at all for a living."

"Slanderer!" ejaculated Syde. "Show me the man who does not have to work to make life bearable, and I'll show you, in the colloquial and intensely interesting words of the day, I'll show you 'nobody home.'"

"Superintendent Bray slipped th

the door, buttonholed Smithers, who seemed to agree thoroly with what his superior said, and then gave certain orders to a certain elderly woman and to Smithers himself.

"We'll take no chances," he whispered to that gentleman, "we'll have them searched in spite of what Syde said. Perhaps we will be able to find the gem."

Angry and expostulating, the members of the company were marched away to undergo the humiliating experience of being searched, the men by Smithers, and the women by the old wardrobe woman, in whom Bray had absolute confidence.

These arrangements made, Bray reentered Miss Hayden's dressing-room, halted, and stood aghast at the conversation he overheard.

"Yes, Miss Hayden," Ty was saying, "I agree with you that the picture field is unlimited. All that is lost by the absence of the human voice is made up by the fact that all nature can be made use of as scenery. I suppose that your heart is in the work, Miss Hayden."

"It is all I think of;" replied the girl.

At this point the impatient Bray interrupted.

"It seems to me," he remarked, "that we are losing time. Has Miss Hayden told you all the circumstances of the loss of the gem?"

"I have answered the questions that Mr. Syde asked me," returned Helen. "And I must say," here she laughed a bit, "I must say that he was not very inquisitive. Quite different from other detectives I have met."

"I found out all there was to know," interposed Ti, with a little deprecatory gesture. "Miss Hayden tells me that she left the gem here in her room, was gone a few minutes, and when she returned the jewel had been taken. That is all there is to know, as I see it."

Superintendent Bray was plainly vexed over the casual manner in which his friend seemed to be taking the serious situation, and took no pains to conceal his state of mind.

"You will pardon my saying so," he exclaimed, "but do you not think that you are treating the theft of an almost priceless jewel very lightly? It would give me real unhappiness to have Miss Hayden lose her gem in my plant."

Before Ti Syde had a chance to reply to this comment a young man entered the room breathlessly.

"The police have come, Mr. Bray," he said. "Shall I send them up here?"

Bray turned inquiringly to Ti, and his manner showed that, after all, he felt the necessity of leaning on this dependable man in spite of his perplexity over the manner in which Syde was conducting matters.

"I don't care to see them," that gentleman said, in response to Bray's unspoken inquiry. "But they will not be in my way if you care to have them make an investigation."

Bray hesitated, then turned helplessly to the young man.

"Send them away for the present—if they will go," he said. "Tell them that I will report the matter at the police station later." Then he addressed Ti Syde once more. "You see," he added, "I am following your lead absolutely."

"Thank you for the compliment," smiled the detective. Then to Miss Hayden: "You were telling me the very interesting story of the picture which you are now taking part in. Will you continue—and tell me about those with whom you act? I am deeply interested."

Bray, his hands thrown in the air, metaphorically speaking, sat back in his chair and watched the famous detective in amazement, while Helen Hayden, glad to talk of her work to such an intelligent listener, told of the picture, of the people in it, and of her interpretation of her part.

"Mr. Grant Grange, the man who steals the gem in the play, must have a great opportunity to act," commented Ti, after he had listened to her.

"And he does it very well," returned the girl. "He is here, I believe. Would you care to meet him?"

"I should be delighted," returned Ti.

It took but a moment for Grant to be summoned, and his appearance followed immediately. The detective was most courteous and showed great interest in the conversation that followed.

Mr. Bray had stepped out, but now returned and beckoned to Ti. Taking him just outside the door he whispered into his ear.

"It is strange that you wanted to meet Grant Grange," he said. "I'll tell you something that one of the crowd that has just left the hall heard Miss Hayden say about him."

Ti smiled. "All right," he replied. "If it will give you any satisfaction."

"Grant offered to help Miss Hayden in her search for the jewel," continued Bray, disregarding Syde's manner, "and she replied that she didn't trust him. Grange was the last person to be with her when she had the thing, and there may be some bearing on the theft from that fact."

"Possibly," returned Ti. "The fact that she was with him I already know —you remember that facts can't act. As for her not trusting him, or saying that she did not, that—well, possibly that is immaterial."

They were about to return to the dressing-room when down the hall came a figure in blue. The uniform of a policeman was not an unusual sight around the studio, but at this time it created interest among the few people still remaining on that floor. The man in blue walked directly up to Superintendent Bray.

"I have been informed about the theft," he said. "I am connected with the precinct over here, and the sergeant wanted me to make a few inquiries, if you don't mind. He doesn't want to be handicapped by getting information hours after the thing happened."

Bray glanced at Ti, who was looking intently at the newcomer.

"Mr. Syde is handling the matter," he said. "I'll make a report latter."

The man in blue frowned and glanced at the detective. "But," he began, "the——"

Syde spoke quickly.

"Perhaps, Mr. Bray," he said, "it would be well to allow the officer to make any investigations he sees fit."

Bray, amazed at Ti's change of attitude, nodded to the man in blue.

"Miss Hayden is inside," he remarked. "You may ask her any questions you want to."

The other stepped inside the room and entered into conversation with Helen and Grant Grange, while Ti and Mr. Bray remained in the doorway. Presently Grant and the man emerged, and the former led the way to his own dressing-room. Bray started to follow, but the man in blue was some distance away and Ti spoke quickly.

"Remain where you are, please," he said, "and don't let any one go down that hall till I come back." Then, his manner changing completely, his step light and noiseless, Ti Syde darted down the hall in the direction of the dressing-room into which Grange and the man in blue had disappeared.

The door was a bit ajar, and close to the opening the detective took his stand, having taken note of the fact that a huge trunk stood near, behind which he would be able to conceal himself should occasion demand. He could hear every word that was spoken inside the room, and now Grange's voice came to him.

"It's perfectly outrageous," the actor was saying, "but I shall submit to a search to show you my willingness to do all that I can to aid in the recovery of the jewel. I place no confidence in that man Syde; he seems to treat the matter as a joke."

"Thank you," responded the other, running his hands over the person of the actor in a hasty tho thoro search. "I did not mention the fact that I wanted to search you before Miss Hayden, for I believe in being as decent about a thing like this as possible. No one need know that you have suffered this indignity."

There was silence for a few minutes, then the man in blue spoke again.

"And the clothing you were wearing when you were with Miss Hayden while she still had the jewel," he said. "I had better look at that as a matter of form."

There came the sound of Grange moving about the little room as he took from his wardrobe trunk the blue dress coat he had worn in the picture. This he handed to the other, together with the vest and trousers.

Ti Syde could not see inside the room, but he was able to guess pretty well what was going on.

"I am very much obliged to you," the uniformed man was saying as he went thru the pockets of coat and trousers carefully but quickly, "for being so decent about this. Of course, I felt sure that you would not have the gem, but the sergeant was very keen to have me search the last person who was with Miss Hayden when she had the gem. Thank you again. Here are your clothes."

As the sound of his steps approaching the door came to Syde, he dropped behind the big trunk, and presently the man in blue and Grant Grange came out of the room and started toward Miss Hayden's quarters. They paused a moment at the door, knocked, and, at a word from that lady, entered. Instantly Syde was on the move again, and when he, too, came to Helen's door, it was from the opposite direction.

"Come in," exclaimed Bray from inside.

"I believe, Mr. Bray," said Ti, nodding to the others, "that the gem has evaporated. I have been downstairs, and have found no clew that amounts to anything. May I speak with you about something that I saw there?"

The two men stepped outside the door, Bray disgusted and disappointed in the detective, and the latter, the instant they were out of sight of the others, keen and alert.

"Tell that policeman," he fairly commanded Bray, "that you want to speak to him—to wait there for you—that you have something important to tell him. Then come back here to me."

Dazed, Bray went inside once more and spoke to the man in blue, as Syde has requested. That worthy seemed impatient and inclined to refuse to obey the superintendent's request, but on second thoughts nodded his willingness to wait, and continued his conversation with the others.

"Now," whispered Syde, quickly, the moment Bray had returned to his side, "take me to your wardrobe woman. Can you trust her?"

"Implicitly," was the reply, as Bray led the way to the place where stock clothing was kept for use of the "extra" people in the pictures. Members of the stock company usually disdained using the company's property in that manner.

Mrs. Franklin, the keeper of the wardrobe, was about to leave for the day when the two men approached.

"Please do as this gentleman wants, whatever it is," said Bray, "and consider anything he says to you absolutely confidential."

"Do not tell even Mr. Bray himself," interposed Ti, laughingly.

He took the woman aside, and, winking at the superintendent, spoke low.

"Is there a policeman's uniform missing from the wardrobe?" he inquired.

"One was used yesterday in a picture and has not been returned," responded Mrs. Franklin.

"And I suppose there was a policeman's badge on the coat?" continued Syde.

"Of course."

"To whom did you give it—the uniform?"

"His name is Blake, I think," returned the wardrobe woman. "He is that strange new man that appears in so many different make-ups. Mr. Bray can tell you more about him than I can."

"Thank you," returned Syde. He moved quickly to Bray's side.

"I pretended that I did not want even you to hear what I had to say," he whispered, as they walked toward Miss Hayden's room, "in order to impress on her the necessity of keeping quiet about it. Now, tell me all you know about some new man that has come here who appears in so many different make-ups. Blake is his name, I believe."

Bray, now past the stage where anything would astonish him, told the detective all he knew about the man whom he had pointed out to his friend earlier in the afternoon.

"So," commented Ti, "altho he said that he had shaved his beard and could take clean-shaven parts, none of you have ever seen him without some sort of beard on his face?"

"I guess not," replied Bray, after a moment's consideration.

"Well," smiled Ti, "you have seen him today. Your new man is the policeman in there, and he's wearing one of your stock policeman's suits. Perhaps you will never see it again."

Bray gasped. "I just can't believe it!" he said in a husky whisper.

"It isn't necessary that you should," was Ti's pleasant retort. "But it's a fact."

"But why is he here in that disguise —and how did you guess that he wasn't a real policeman?" was Bray's wondering question.

"As to why he is here, I don't know as I can tell you that as yet," mused Ti.

"But he must be connected with the theft," was Bray's exclamation. "We will have him arrested."

"Hardly," smiled Syde. "Your other question is easily answered, however— you wanted to know how I guessed that he was a fake policeman. Did you notice his badge?"

"Can't say that I did. Wasn't it all right?"

"Certainly it looked all right as far as form goes," replied Syde. "But what do policemen pride themselves on?"

"A lot of them think more of their looks than they do of anything else," returned the superintendent.

"And they spend a few minutes each day shinihg up their badges with their sleeves, I've noticed," said the detective. "The badge worn by the man in there looks dull—as tho it had been scratched on purpose to remove the shine, or as tho soap had been rubbed on it for the same purpose."

"Why," exclaimed Bray, "that's what they do to shiny badges that are to be used in the pictures—for photographic reasons."

"Exactly," returned Ti. "That was what I noticed about the thing. Other things followed. Now," again his manner was quick and commanding, "I want you to take that fake cop aside and tell him some story about some clew you think you have—or better still, tell him that you have no confidence in me, and that you want him to look into the case thoroly. That will allay his suspicions."

"But shan't we arrest him?" cried Bray as loudly as he dared.

"I'll take care of him," replied Ti. "Please do as I ask."

And Bray did, after Syde had said good-by for the day.

The man in blue took the information that the superintendent gave him very seriously, and promised to do all that he could to unravel the mystery. Then, with a word to Miss Hayden and Grant Grange, he passed thru the door of the room and down the hall to the steps that led to the entrance of the building.

He passed one or two curious people in the hall, but saw no more of Ti Syde. On to the street he walked and in the direction of the elevated road. Before he reached it, however, he spoke to the chauffeur of a waiting taxi, and was soon whirling away northward.

And Ti Syde, cool and collected, smiling inwardly, kept his eyes on the speeding vehicle, as he sat back comfortably in a big closed car that had been waiting for him near the studio door.

"There are more things in Heaven and Earth, my Horatio, than were ever dreamed of in your philosophy," he quoted aloud, more or less correctly, as he lighted a long, black cigar.

This most interesting story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

Bloom Is Snipped.

There is a certain well-known surgeon in Boston who had, some months ago, a very splendid crop of hair. Altho the surgeon is not old, his hair is snow-white, and he was very proud of its beauty. He wore it parted in the middle and rather long, and it fluffed luxuriantly on either side of the parting. The impulse toward the change in hairdressing came to the surgeon in this manner:

He had operated upon a woman, and was bending over her as she began to come out of the ether. She opened her eyes for a moment, and then closed them again. Then, with a long sigh and in a rapt voice she said:

"What a beautiful white chrysanthemum!"

The students present exploded, and now the surgeon wears the hair cut as close as a gentleman may.

* * *

Even the Cat.

An Indianapolis woman who recently returned from Rochester, Minn., where she was taking treatment of the Mayo brothers, tells the following story of a farmer who was visiting in the city:

"And this park was given to the city by the Mayos!" he exclaimed.

"And the Mayos gave this library to the city, and this church was built by the Mayos, and the money for this school was contributed by the Mayos," informed his host as they sped about the city seeing the sights.

"Well, that is wonderful," said the farmer. "They certainly have made Rochester. Here comes a cat. I suppose that belongs to the Mayos, too. Let's stop and ask it."

"Say, kitty, who do you belong to?" asked the farmer of the cat.

"Me-ow," replied the cat.

* * *

The youth who is unwilling to toe the mark usually remains at the foot.

Their Lost Prince

Or, The Love That Swayed a Throne

By Marquis James

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CHAPTER VI.

THE bland indifference with which the populace of the capital received the royal pronunciamento decreeing the coronation of Prince Eitel as heir to assume the throne upon the death or abdication of Leopold, bespoke the discontent which honeycombed the nation. Scarcely less startling had been the manner in which the great middle class—the backbone of the nation—had accepted the news of Rudolph's murder.

Such tragedies more often strengthen than weaken a state. They call to arms and crystallize the patriotic ardor of a nation. Past differences are forgotten in the popular clamor for vengeance upon the culprit.

No such thing occurred in Oligarchia. The affair was widely commented upon, of course, but no more so than had the son of a wealthy merchant been shot. On the other hand, there were any number of quiet expressions of sympathy for those who had lost their lives, sustained wounds, or had been thrown into prison for participation in the riot of the day before at the palace gates.

These things were significant. The curtain was snatched aside. The alarming state of affairs within the kingdom disclosed so that the world could see. Not only was patriotism dead, but the kingdom was in a state of passive anarchy! The iron hand of Leopold had weakened at last.

The prompt imprisonment of all known or suspected revolutionary leaders within the kingdom after the palace gate riot delayed a crisis, perhaps an overthrow. Lacking leaders the revolutionaries were disarmed for the moment. New leaders would spring up, however, as they had always done. They would come from nowhere, it seemed. This was an illusion of the Orlandoff plotters. The internal discontent in Oligarchia was the fine result of a secret revolutionary propaganda the Orlandoffs, with consummate cleverness, had fomented for years. Of this, even the revolutionist leaders were unaware, so adroitly had the cunning Metz masked his program.

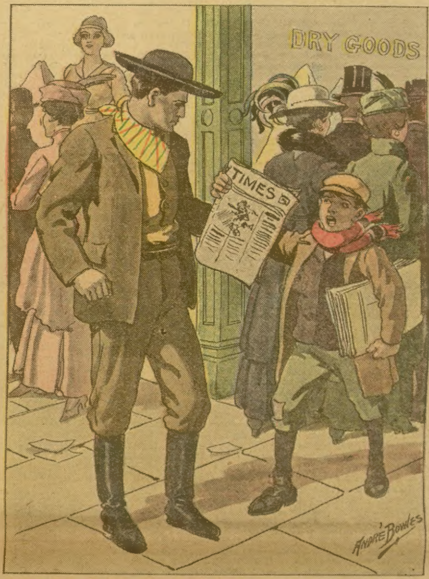
Metz's project had been splendidly planned and admirably executed. For ten years his secret agents—and even they knew not whom they served—had gone abroad in the kingdom organizing clandestinely revolutionary societies. These agitators came chiefly from Russia, the hotbed of anarchy. They comprised a nondescript lot. They were fanatics of all sorts, wild advocates of impossible ideals, enemies of all government—but they served Metz's purposes and served them well.

Leopold conceded them no mercy. They were executed, imprisoned, banished, and exiled. But these repressive measures only added fuel to the fire. Step by step the crafty Metz was undermining the house of Regalshofen. Recently, with his son and the chief conspirators, he had slipped into the kingdom and established himself in a mansion of the boulevard.

The climax was near at hand. By a swift series of baffling murders he planned to exterminate the Regalshofen line of succession, drive old Leopold to his grave by grief, and claim the throne for the Orlandoffs by right of inheritance. In the murder of Crown Prince Rudolph, the first act in the great drama of blood and crime had been played.

Leopold's wildest fears were true. The Orlandoff heir lived and had the backing of the most cunning diplomat of the age in the fight for a throne.

Eitel was destined to assume the rank of Crown Prince as a marked man. Already his murder was planned, and Nicholas Metz was picked for the deed. Metz, the elder, the evil genius of Europe, halted at nothing—even to poisoning the mind of his only son and inciting him to murder. With the dispatch of Eitel, the path would be clear for the Orlandoffs—excepting, of course, Prince Robin, the third and youngest son of Leopold, already rather puzzlingly alluded to in the conversations of the plotters.



"All about the murder of the Prince."

When Metz eliminated him as a potential contender for the throne, one may rest assured it was not done without good reason. Metz was a man who took no chances, and if he said Robin, tho a prince of royal blood, would never stand between him and a throne, he was likely to be right in that assumption.

Prince Robin's career had been a strange one. For nine years he had not been seen at his father's court. While a youth he had cast aside his royal raiment, forsworn all claims upon the throne, and gone forth into the world which had swallowed him up under an assumed name.

To the world he became the "Lost Prince," famed in song and story—an international, half-mythical hero of childhood, sharing honors with such personages as King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. Parents deified him, pointed out his manifold virtues, and held him up to their sons as an ideal to be aspired to. His story was told in every land, in every language, in every clime.

Boys, by nature hero worshipers, and girls, by nature romanticists, sought the self-exiled Prince Robin in their home communities, thruout the four corners of the earth. But their labors came to no more success than did the enterprises of the secret agents of Governments, whose rulers knew but too well the tremendous political asset the Prince's career would give him should he ever return to Oligarchia and aspire to the throne.

Dreams, they say, never come true in this practical world. The illusions woven about the name of the wanderer were undispelled. The half-legendary Robin remained the Lost Prince. Many are the stories spun as to the precise cause of Robin's self-banishment, each adding greater luster to his name. This, however, is the true account, set to record for the first time.

In his days at court Prince Robin was the idol of the kingdom. His fearless, democratic ways endeared the young Prince to the hearts of the hard-pressed subjects of his despotic father. All of which old Leopold looked upon with displeasure. His idea of a prince was one who trod upon the pleasures of his people instead of catering to them. It was on Robin's sixteenth birthday, shortly after the death of the Queen mother that the boy was called before his royal father.

The lad's mind was filled with conjecture as he entered his father's waiting chamber in response to a peremptory command. His meetings with his father had grown strangely formal within recent years. Altho he was loath to confess it, Prince Robin felt an increasing aversion toward his royal parent as time went on and his boyish eyes became opened to the conduct of things around him.

"My son," Leopold began kindly, after formal greetings, "your angel mother is gone, your father is growing old and begins to feel only too heavily the weight of his burdens. I must begin to rely upon my three noble sons—boys who are the pride of their father's heart—for support. Already Rudolph and Eitel have begun to assume cares and responsibilities incumbent upon their positions."

"Yes, father," the young Prince replied, soberly, still thinking of his mother, "and I am ready and willing to take up my share, only hoping that I may be able truly to lighten your burdens."

"Your words cheer me," replied the old monarch. "You are a good son. I bear in mind you are young and have a young man's desires. Your task will not be irksome. I rather fancy it will be to your liking. I am going to send you away. You will be gone some time—in Saxony."

"Not to Wirlitz?"

"Yes," responded the King, "to Wirlitz. You must depart tomorrow."

"I am overjoyed, father," the boy Prince enthused. "I was in Wirlitz last year, you know, and such sport I made of it. The populace——"

"Tut, tut, my boy!" cautioned Leopold, in gentle reproof. "I might as well tell you now these foolish notions in your youthful head about currying favor with the populace must be forgotten. The people aren't to love you. They are to fear and respect you. That's the proper attitude for a prince of the royal blood to take. While your errand to Wirlitz may be pleasant, it is a matter of serious business nevertheless. Do you know the Princess Katherine Amabel of Gothia?"

"Why, yes," answered Robin, quickly. "I have been presented to her—quite formally, however. She is much older than I am."

"How did she impress you?"

"Why, very well, I am sure," Robin replied, frankly puzzled by this time at the sudden turn of his father's remarks, "but, begging your pardon, why do you ask?"

Misgivings darted into the young Prince's mind.

"I will be brief and explicit," the father replied, "I asked how Katherine of Gothia impressed you because you must marry her. My boy, it is a state necessity. No time can be lost. You must woo her earnestly and wed her quickly. Regalshofen must contract a marriage alliance with the house of Gothia at once. It may become essential to the very national existence of Oligarchia. You must marry Princess Katherine to learn the state secrets of that great and powerful family. I have tried every other means and failed. The Gothias, while the world little suspects, are our bitterest enemies. But, notwithstanding, they accept the match for the same reason we see it. Katherine will be coached to spy on us, but I rely upon you to outwit a woman."

"Father!" the young Prince gasped, when able to grasp sufficiently the brutal signficance of Leopold's words. "Father, what are you saying to me!"

The King's brow grew dark. He caught the portent of his son's tone and manner.

"Young man," he replied sternly, "that is not for you to ask. It is for you to obey. By virtue of your station you owe a duty to your state. I have shown it to you. Perform it. You must marry Katherine of Gothia for the reasons I have stated. If you can win her without falling in love with her, so much the better. I do not approve of love in your case; it is a dangerous thing. But if you can make her love you—and I well know the weakness of women for youths their junior in years—ah, then your task becomes easy. A woman in love is defenseless; she is as clay in your hands."

At the words the young Prince forgot himself. He saw his father's request not as a duty toward his state, but as an infamous proposal to betray a young woman. He thought not in terms of princes, princesses, and kingdoms; but of tender hearts and humanity.

"I tell you now, once and for all, father," said he, "I will be a partner to no such vicious enterprise. Whether I love or ever could love Katherine of Gothia, or whether she could love me, is out of the question. That much greater would be my crime if I won her love to betray her. Better this kingdom perish from the earth than be sustained by such treachery."

Such arguments were not designed to move Leopold.

"What? You defy me?" the King demanded. "Your words are unworthy of a prince of the blood. Shame be upon you! But, by the gods, you will obey me! You will be off at once to do my bidding, or never set foot again in this household."

"Then the latter it shall be," replied Robin, with a determination that astounded the wrathy monarch. "Better that I be an outcast begging my bread, but with a conscience clear, than the most powerful monarch upon earth, sitting upon a throne steeped in the blood of broken hearts. Love is the most sacred thing a woman can give. You ask me to debase it; to be a spy upon my wife; to be a traitor to my own home. It's dastardly!"

"You speak as a silly infant speaks," Leopold responded, taken back by his son's words, but his will none the less flexible. "You talk like a love-sick swain. Love?" the King sneered. "Love? What is it? It's the toy the strong places in the hands of the weakling. It's for women. Man should be made of sterner stuff. Love has no place in the lives of princes, except as a means to an end, as a snare for the unwary."

"I see it in a different light," the Prince replied calmly. "I intend to marry for love alone. My wife will be the woman who is all the world to me, more than thrones, more than crowns or ermine, more than——"

"Enough!" Leopold cried. "Do you do my bidding or do you challenge my command?"

"You put it inconveniently, father, but since that is your way of doing things you leave me no choice."

"What, then, is your word?"

"I decline the errand," the Prince said quietly.

"Is this your ultimate decision, knowing what it entails?"

"I know not what it entails—that matters little to me," Robin responded. "I do it to maintain my honor and keep peace with my conscience."

"Then, begone!" Leopold shouted the words. "I disown you! You are a disgrace to the name and rank you bear."

"Then I forswear my name and my rank, and vow never to set foot again within this kingdom!"

And so saying Prince Robin of Oligarchia, as such, became a memory. He left the palace and went the ways of common men. The King did not take the boy's words or his action seriously at the outset. But when the days passed and the first flush of the royal anger subsided, he dispatched secret agents to find the lost Prince. They returned empty-handed. The story of the Prince's exile spread, and Leopold redoubled his efforts to find the boy. The secret agents located him in America, on the plains of the West, following the humble yet romantic vocation of a cowboy in the saddle. Thru intermediaries overtures were made to Robin to return, and bygones would be bygones, he was given to understand. But Robin was in no mood to give ear to these entreaties.

Leopold was incensed at the spurning of the first compromise he had ever offered in his life. His rage flared forth anew. He publicly proclaimed Robin disowned, and the Prince's name was stricken from the rolls of the royal family. But this was an empty revenge. The more Robin lived among sovereign men the more repulsive the intrigues of royalty became, and the firmer grew the resolve to keep his vow. And the fanciful tales woven about his life concerned him not at all.

Months after this last episode at the court at Kolberg a crumpled newspaper from New York found its way to the Western prairies. The cowboys lay rolled up in their blankets about the campfire. Several had dozed off. By the flickering light of the fire Robin scanned the paper. His eyes fell upon the published cable. He read it intently, then bit his lip in reflection and gazed into the fire. A coyote's howl echoed over the range as the royal adventurer lay there, lost in reflection. Then a smile erased the thoughtful lines, and pillowing his head on his saddle the erstwhile Prince dropped off in slumber.

On the other side of the fire one of the blanketed forms had been peering searchingly and cautiously from beneath the brim of the broad hat drawn over his face. He studied every expression on the face of the Prince as he read the paper, and did not close his eyes until satisfied the Prince was asleep.

This man was the secret agent of Ferdinand Metz, ringleader of the Orlandoff conspiracy! And now it becomes plainer why that crafty individual was so positive in his assurance that Robin would never interfere with his plans to seize the throne.

The Lost Prince led a venturesome and picturesque career. He was at sea for a couple of years, then a gold prospector in Alaska, a hunter and trapper in the Arctic, and a cowpuncher, in turn. The wanderlust held him in its thrall. He roamed the world at will. He who might have moved at one of the proudest courts in Christendom found happiness and contentment in the estate of common men.

But all this transpired before he fell in love, before he learned his footsteps were dogged by spies, and before other world-shaking events, just now in the chronicling, came to pass in his native Oligarchia.

CHAPTER VII.

THE old tyrant of Oligarchia slept late the morning after the murder of Prince Rudolph. With his heart eaten by woes and fears too terrifying for human expression, he had paced the confines of his bedchamber like a caged lion, and until dawn had not slept at all. Once in the keeping of Morpheus he slumbered as one drugged. It was the dead, dull, stupid sleep of utter physical exhaustion, coupled with the ravaging infirmities of age.

Noon struck before Leopold was awakened. He stretched his stiff old limbs, and with effort sat up on the side of his bed. His valet was beside him in an instant, assisting him to his feet and helping him on with his royal raiment. Mulhausen, the secretary, entered before the royal toilet had been completed.

"Your majesty, the prime minister waits without," he said. "He came four hours ago, but I would not permit your majesty's rest to be broken."

"What does he wish?"

"He would not tell me, your majesty. He demanded to see you at once. He says it's highly important."

There was a fine, contagious suspicion in the secretary's tone. His distrust of Von Vlissengen became less veiled as the prime minister gradually increased his sphere of influence about the aged ruler. The faithful Mulhuasen departed.

Dressed, the King was served with his morning meal in his bedchamber. It consisted mostly of a specially prepared gruel, highly unpalatable, but recommended by the court physician for its vigor-giving qualities. The King had been on strict diet for years in order to prolong his days on the throne. The repast, if such it might be called, completed, the King on the arm of his valet proceeded thru the door.

Von Vlissengen was there to greet him. The prime minister's brow was clouded. His manner boded bad news. But before more than formal greetings had been exchanged between the monarch and the minister, Mulhausen again entered the room.

"Your majesty," he said, "the royal executioners wait your order. Colonel Tirplitz was condemned to die at sunrise, but when the time for the execution came it was found that you had signed no death warrant."

"That's right," the monarch replied impatiently. "I was too upset yesterday to think of that detail. Mulhausen, you should have reminded me."

"I, too, had forgotten, your majesty," the secretary apologized, bowing low, "and I crave your pardon. Here is the warrant now, ready for your signature."

Leopold, weary of standing, had sunk down in an adjacent chair at a desk. He took the parchment ordering the execution of the innocent man. The secretary handed a pen over to the monarch.

"Hold, your majesty, one moment before you sign that!" interrupted Von Vlissengen, at his first opportunity. "Delay the execution. I received intelligence last night which leads me to believe Tirplitz is innocent."

"Innocent! Did he not confess?" exploded Leopold.

"But innocent men admit crimes sometimes to shield others," reminded the minister.

"In such cases they deserve death," replied Leopold, as he dashed off his signature to the death warrant.

"Order Tirplitz executed at once," he commanded, handing the document to Mulhausen.

"Very well, your majesty."

A heartless, triumphant smile played on Mulhausen's lips. He bowed and slipped noiselessly away. There was a look in the secretary's eye that the prime minister did not like.

"One moment!"

The King's command halted the secretary in the doorway. Mulhausen and Von Vlissengen again exchanged glances. He feared that he had not made his exit quickly enough, and that old Leopold had weakened in his determination. Hope mounted the countenance of the prime minister. He was about to interpose another plea for Tirplitz's life when the King thundered:

"Mulhausen, make it a public execution!"

From the menace of Leopold's tone, Von Vlissengen knew arguments were useless. With an exclamation of despairing resignation, he dropped his arm to his side.

"All is lost, I fear," he thought. "The old man is blind in his fury, blind to all sense of right and justice."

"Mulhausen sneered at the vanquished prime minister as he bowed again with the reverential:

"Very well, your majesty; it is the traitor's just deserts."

He closed the door softly behind him and was gone—on his errand of death. Von Vlissengen shuddered as he reckoned the consequences.

CHAPTER VIII.

KING LEOPOLD and Von Vlissengen had not been alone five minutes until an unexplained and startling thing happened. Leopold sat motionless for a full minute after Mulhausen had departed. The monarch was immersed in thought, and the prime minister was searching his mind for an avenue by which he might approach the King before it was yet too late to halt the execution of Tirplitz.

The King turned suddenly and spoke.

"Well, Von Vlissengen," he blurted out, "what do you think of it?"

The monarch's tone was strongly questioning.

"Of what, your majesty?" asked Von Vlissengen.

"The execution of Tirplitz."

"Your majesty, that is precisely what I wish to speak about—and I must speak in all haste."

"Why in haste?"

"Ere it is too late."

"Too late?"

"Yes," responded the prime minister, with all the firmness and conviction he could marshal. "Tirplitz has not been given a fair hearing. He may be guilty and death may be his just deserts, but the affair must be sifted to the bottom. A throne is at stake. We cannot afford to lose sight of justice. Even a man suspected of the murder of a prince is entitled to plead his cause. Think, your majesty, think! Suppose Tirplitz should be innocent! Where then would we stand, hustling him off to execution without fair trial or investigation? That, too, would be murder.

"What I have learned during the night leads me to doubt his guilt. True, I may be wrong, but I beseech you, your majesty, do not commit this rash act until things have been made more certain. Delay the execution a day at all costs. For the sake of the throne and the kingdom, hear me this once!"

Von Vlissengen paused and gazed anxiously into the face of the monarch and studied the effect of his impassioned words. He was surprised he had been able to speak so long without interruption. The fact that Leopold had given respectful ear and by his silence at least seemed to consider the wisdom of his words, encouraged the minister. The venerable monarch returned no reply. He sat absorbed, weighing the significance of his shrewd minister's words.

The King had not been blind to the underlying portent of the scene which had just been enacted in his presence. It was apparent that Mulhausen and Von Vlissengen were bent on diametrically opposed courses. Mulhausen, it was plain, desired above all things the speedy execution of Tirplitz. On the other hand, Von Vlissengen wished at all costs to delay the sentence of death, and possibly to forestall it altogether. Leopold regarded the conflicting zeal of these two men as puzzling rather than ominous.

The possibility of an ulterior motive on the part of either, of course, never occurred to the monarch. It was unthinkable. As Leopold reasoned, it was merely a case of honest difference in judgment between two patriotic men, working toward the same end, tho by different routes. With which to cast his decision was a matter of conjecture. True, Von Vlissengen was the royal prime minister, the first officer in the kingdom, next to the regent himself. And to all accounts Mulhausen was but a secretary. But in reality Mulhausen was more—he was one of the most powerful men in the kingdom, a thing that Von Vlissengen well knew.

The King debated the matter earnestly, but not nearly so earnestly as he would had he known the whole truth—that his life and his throne hinged upon the decision!

As the King pondered his gaze ranged out of a window into the inner courtyard of the palace. Manacled and surrounded by a guard of troops with bayonets fixed marched Tirplitz from the dungeons to his execution. Beside the commandant of the guards walked triumphant Mulhausen. The procession was on its way to the old scaffold which stood in an inclosure beside the prison, situated conveniently a few squares from the palace. There the ready and practiced executioner was prepared at a moment's notice [illegible] out the royal commands—of which there had been many in the recent years of the reign of Leopold.

Heralds already had been sent thruout the capital crying the announcement of a public execution. Leopold was the only monarch of modern times who still held fast to this barbaric relic of the Dark Ages. He made an execution a thing of great ceremony. His instrument of death was the French guillotine. A public execution instilled into the hearts of his subjects the proper respect for authority, he always said.

Leopold noted the ashen, rigid face of Colonel Tirplitz as he marched stoically to his doom. Once the condemned man glanced up. His eye caught and held that of the monarch who peered from the window on the floor above. That glance chilled the iron monarch to the marrow. Von Vlissengen, a tense spectator on all this, saw the King avert his face. The prime minister awaited the psychological moment for his final plea.

The procession now was abreast the window. The rhythmic clomp! clomp! of the soldiers' tread upon the polished flagstones of the courtyard, and the melancholy jangle! jangle! of the chains which fettered the doomed Tirplitz echoed thru the great chambers of the silent palace like the voice of ghosts raised in warning.

Von Vlissengen knew the supreme moment had arrived.

"Save him! Your majesty, save him until we have some evidence to justify this course! To behead this man is murder—be it by royal decree or no! It is murder unless we have conclusive proof of guilt."

The prime minister threw every emotion within him into this entreaty. It was his last hope—his final card to play. These words turned the scale. Leopold wavered in the balance but a moment.

"Stop!" he shouted thru the window. "The execution is postponed twenty-four hours by my decree. Dismiss the guards and bring Tirplitz before me at once!"

It had all transpired in five minutes.

LACK OF MONEY

Was a Godsend in This Case.

It is not always that a lack of money is a benefit.

A lady in Ark. owes her health to the fact that she could not pay in advance the fee demanded by a specialist to treat her for stomach trouble. In telling of her case she says:

"I had been treated by four different physicians during 10 years of stomach trouble. Lately I called on another who told me he could not cure me; that I had neuralgia of the stomach. Then I went to a specialist who told me I had catarrh of the stomach and said he could cure me in four months but would have to have his money down. I could not raise the necessary sum and in my extremity I was led to quit coffee and try Postum.

"The results have been magical. I now sleep well at night, something I had not done for a long time; the pain in my stomach is gone and I am a different woman.

"Every time I had tried to stop coffee I suffered from severe headaches, so I continued to drink it although I had reason to believe it was injurious to me. But when I had Postum to shift to it was different.

"To my surprise I did not miss coffee when I began to drink Postum.

"Coffee had been steadily and surely killing me and I didn't fully realize what was doing it until I quit and changed to Postum." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

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Both kinds are equally delicious and cost about the same per cup.

"There's a Reason" for Postum.

—sold by Grocers.

To Von Vlissengen it had seemed an age. With the weight of a throne off his shoulders, the prime minister breathed a sigh of relief. For once the King had listened to reason. It was almost beyond belief. From depths of despair he again saw a glimmer of hope—despite the terrifying intelligence concerning the conspiracy back of the murder of Prince Rudolph, which he had learned thru the royal secret service agents the night before.

The prime minister and the King exchanged no further words until Tirplitz—his chains removed—was ushered into the room by two guards. Mulhausen brought up the rear. His glance darted toward the prime minister. It was a look of incalculable hatred—the dark, fierce stare of a plotter thwarted. This time it was Von Vlissengen who smiled triumphantly. He no longer doubted the traitorous hand Mulhausen, the King's secretary and secret agent, played in this gamble for a throne.

"I will see Colonel Tirplitz alone," announced Leopold, entering his private room adjoining.

The Colonel, at a gesture, followed the monarch. Mulhausen started after him.

."I said I would see Colonel Tirplitz alone."

The irony of the King's tone was undisguised. Even Von Vlissengen was thunderstruck. Mulhausen slunk back and out of the large room where stood Von Vlissengen and the guards.

"Curse you! I have you to thank for this, else the traitor would be dead by now!"

Mulhausen hissed the words in the prime minister's ear as he passed. Whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad. As far as Von Vlissengen's opinion was concerned, Mulhausen had betrayed himself then and there.

It was several moments before the door to the room where the King was closeted with Colonel Tirplitz opened.

"Von Vlissengen, I wish to see you," announced Leopold.

The prime minister went inside and closed the door behind him. His first glance fell upon Colonel Tirplitz. The Colonel's countenance no longer was that of a condemned man.

"And now repeat your story to the prime minister," said Leopold, addressing the erstwhile prisoner. "It is him you have to thank that the death sentence was not carried out. I was not myself yesterday when I wrongly assumed that your admission was a confession of guilt to a part in my boy's murder. The crime had me all unstrung."

Briefly the Colonel repeated his story. True, he had accused himself of the crime. But that was an apostrophe of patriotism. His "fatal mistake" he spoke of, which nearly cost him his life, he explained, was committed when he refused to entertain the inventor of the silent gun, the result being that his perfected death device had ultimately found its way into the hands of the assassin of the Crown Prince.

Thus the loyal soldier still persisted in blaming himself for the murder of the Prince. The day before—stunned by the realization of his error, if so indeed it may be called—he had been so unnerved that, instead of speaking in his own defense, he actually had made it appear that he was implicated in the crime. This coupled with the inflamed condition of the King's mind had nearly meant death to him.

"Tirplitz, your patriotism has won for you the cross of the Legion of Honor," beamed the monarch.

"Your majesty, I cannot accept it. I am unworthy of such an honor after my fatal blunder," Tirplitz persisted.

The official records which had been sent for were brought in. They bore out in detail Tirplitz's story of the disposition of Menden, the inventor, whose idea of a silent gun had been dismissed as the dream of a fanatic.

"And now, your majesty," said Von Vlissengen, "we have a clew which can lead nowhere but to the disclosure of the murderers. This Menden was here four years ago. If he can be traced and all his subsequent dealings accounted for, we will find the murderers or their confederates."

"I will, with his majesty's permission, accept that mission, and never rest until I have found the murderer!" exclaimed Tirplitz.

"Your wish is granted," announced the King. "Be off at once."

"And I have one request only to make," resumed Tirplitz, "and that is my mission be kept absolutely secret."

"Most assuredly it will be kept secret," responded Leopold.

"But, if I may ask it, I would prefer particularly that Mulhausen, the royal secretary, should not know it."

"But Mulhausen knows all my secrets—they are safe with him. You do not suspect my confidential secretary?"

"I cannot say whom I suspect now. My suspicions may be groundless, but can your majesty see fit to grant my request?"

"That Mulhausen shall not know your mission as the hunter of the assassins of the Crown Prince?"

"Yes, your majesty."

"Your request is granted," replied the King, "however foolish I may reckon it. Your loyalty has well won you that small favor."

Von Vlissengen said nothing during this colloquy, but thought a good deal. He was not so sure Tirplitz had made a foolish request, as the King put it, and hoped Leopold would see fit to observe his promise. Tirplitz's remark surprised the prime minister, who determined to ask the Colonel the grounds for his evident suspicions of Mulhausen when suitable opportunity would present itself.

There would, however, have been no need for questions or explanations regarding the loyalty of Mulhausen, could either Leopold or Von Vlissengen have witnessed the scene that night in the conspirator's mansion out on the fashionable boulevard. A regular meeting had been concluded, and the plotters had departed, leaving Colonel Metz and his son, Nicholas, the murderer of Prince Rudolph, alone.

"It is unfortunate Mulhausen did not carry thru his plan to have Tirplitz executed," said Nicholas to his father.

"Yes," the Colonel replied, "that would have been a stroke of exceptional luck for our cause. It would have put Leopold and his men off on the wrong track at once. But it was purely accidental that Tirplitz was ever cast in suspicion. I can't understand it, even from the report Mulhausen submits, that he should have made such an evident confession to a crime of which he could not have had the slightest knowledge."

"Perhaps," the son replied, "when he learned the type of weapon which had killed the Prince, he so reproached himself that he had let Menden slip thru his fingers that he accused himself because of his blunder."

"That indeed would have been a display of patriotism that is hard to find among the retinue of a despot," the father observed. "But be it as it may, supporters, no matter how loyal, will avail Leopold little. With Eitel out of the way the throne is within our grasp—the coronation of an Orlandoff will be but a ceremony."

"And Eitel dies next week," announced young Nicholas, grimly. "With Mulhausen's aid the task will be easy."

The arch-conspirators—father and son—were confident, extremely so. The coveted throne seemed within their reach. With Mulhausen, the most trusted confidential agent in the kingdom, a spy in their employ, it appeared that nothing could thwart the realization of their plans of twenty years. But Mulhausen, for all his craft, had antagonized Von Vlissengen and put him on his guard. This was an incalculable blunder. Von Vlissengen was to be reckoned with by the conspirators as a dangerous enemy. He carried more trump cards up his sleeve in the game of statecraft than Bret Hart's heathen Chinee. He presented an obstacle the conspirators, for all their planning, had seriously underestimated.

CHAPTER IX.

THE sea glistened in the sunlight and moved restlessly as a vast undulating meadow does under the spell of the spring winds. The grizzled salt at the wheel, his nor'wester cast aside, stood with his hairy arms bared and spun the spokes with a jolly "Heave ho!" and a catchy snatch of sailorman song.

The Thor responded. There was an easy list to port as the breeze swept her stern, caught the sails and bellied them out in great crescents. The veteran two-master lolled in the April sea and lay to for the last leg of her long journey. The morning mist was disappearing and Liberty statue and the characteristic spires of New York harbor already outlined themselves against the sky.

Three hours more and the Thor would be in port after forty days on the water. The Thor was an old-timer—a sailing ship of the romantic days past and gone. She had come around the Horn and all the way from the Chilean coast laden down with ore. Old Cap'n Bjorenson in the crow's-nest swept the serene horizon with his glasses and megaphoned his orders below to make ready for landing.

On this particular trip the Cap'n carried one passenger, which was a mighty rare circumstance for the Thor. Years and years agone she'd given up all pretense of being a passenger boat, and indeed was content to pick up the meanest kind of a cargo to carry from port to port. The lone passenger on the old Norwegian sailing ship was an upstanding young fellow who minded his business and kept his counsel. He was built like a steel bridge. He had just passed his twenty-fifth birthday. His skin was tanned a copper brown, and the muscles of his brawny neck stood out like steel cables. His large blue eyes, framed behind long curling lashes indexed his courageous, straightforward, adventure-loving nature. He knew a thing about boats, too, and more than once lent a hand to the crew when a hand was needed.

He stood by the heaving starboard bow, one hand upraised, clasping a ratline. He gazed in meditative silence across the gray-green waters toward Liberty monument, and the breeze fanned his curling, golden locks about his temples. A trifle long were his locks, for our lone seafarer had been beyond the reach of the white-tiled palaces of barbers. And neither were his clothes of Fifth avenue or London cut. They were the strong rude garments of the miner of the South American Andes.

An anticipative smile played on his lips as he watched the Gotham skyline loom more and more distinct. He glanced at his watch. Only an hour or so he would be with his Rose—his own Rose, his sweetheart and his bride-to-be. In his cabin he reread her last letter for the hundredth time. It had reached him after a perilous trip thru the mountain passes. She would be waiting for him, she wrote; waiting for him to wrest fortune from the gold-ribbed crags and return to claim her? And after two long years he was returning.

A pardonable pride filled our traveler. He had fought his battle for fortune against fierce odds and had won. The selfsame spirit that had sent Prince Robin of Regalshofen, third in succession to the throne of Oligarchia, away from the royal splendor of the palace and a gilded court to match brain and brawn among men, had bonvoyaged Robert Orr from New York to the far Andes, there to prove himself worthy of the girl he loved. Robert Orr was our solitary traveler. And Robert Orr and Prince Robin of Regalshofen were one and the same. The man who shared the rude fare of the sailors of the tramp schooner could have claimed place at the table of one of the most powerful reigning families on the face of the earth.

As the self-banished Prince gazed out over the sunlit April sea his fancy ran back to the days of his boyhood, when he still was at his father's court. His heart had softened since he had left home. At times his longing to see his old father again before he died was genuine and poignant.

He regretted the bitter words he had uttered in heat and haste at the time of his sudden leave-taking—regretted them because they had been addressed to his father, an old man, and not because they had been addressed against the evils and intrigues of royal courts. For what Robin had seen and observed during his wanderings among freedom had made him all the more an enemy to the practices of royalty of which by birth he was a member.

In observing the Governments of democracies—and especially the Government of the United States—Robin more than once longed to be able to take the reins of authority in his native land, abolish the tyrannies that existed, and set up, as in America, a liberal monarchy, a government for the people and of the people. Indeed the Prince in his daydreams had pictured such a government established in Oligarchia—with himself, King Robin, at its head.

"Ah, but that can never be now," he sighed to himself. "For I am to marry. And my Rose, she is not of Europe's royalty. She could never sit upon a throne. But what care I for thrones and kingdoms when I have my Rose? I know her love is sincere and genuine. I know she is not playing a part—marrying me to betray me—as might be the case in Europe. And to think that in one, two hours more I can feel my arms about her—her soft cheek against mine. I wonder if she has changed in the two years I have been away."

(Continued on Page 22.)

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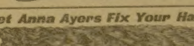

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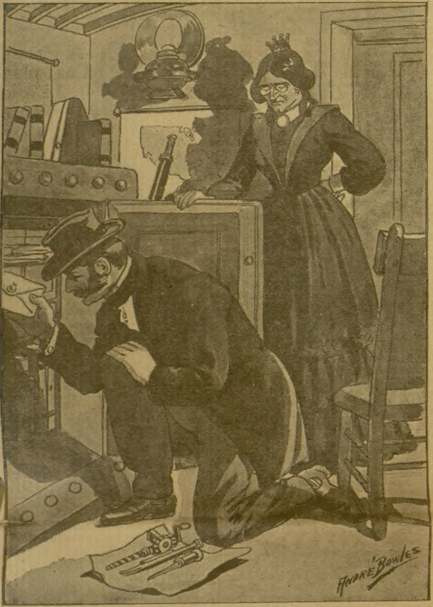

"Shall I watch while you hunt?"

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CHAPTER X.

BY NIGHTFALL the fog had disappeared and the sea was clear. The heavens were moonless, with enough of fleecy clouds to bank most of the visible space aloft. From this came darkness exceeding the average, and limiting the view from the ship.

Lookouts were still watching, but the derelict had not been seen, and the passengers no longer lived in the expectation of the previous hours. The wind had remained steady, and the Swiftstep must be holding her former course, but it was too much to hope that she was off the bows of the Laugh of Day. Captain Foskett, while noncommittal, knew that the derelict must be astern.

He had made his attempt to sight the craft of mystery and failed. Now, he was bound for Paramaribo, and intended to give the ship a heavy press of canvas as soon as the passengers went below, so as to reel off every knot that the craft was capable of making. That this was delayed was only due to the soft heart that really beat under his warrior exterior. He could not meet Eleanor's eyes if he packed his yards in her sight.

Meanwhile, the plot for the night remained unchanged, and was sprung at the time chosen by Jenkinson. At three bells in the first night watch he sidled quietly down the companion, after a look and nod at Hadlock.

That young man was talking to Eleanor and the Allens, and making himself worth hearing, but he was ready for something else. In the midst of a sentence he suddenly paused, looked outward, and carried a hand behind his ear.

"What was that?" he asked softly.

"I heard nothing," replied Martha. "What was it?"

"Something like a hail. Listen! Did you not hear it? Ah! there it comes again!—it is 'Help, help!'"

All were now peering into the darkness and all trying to catch the sound, but nothing was to be heard. Eleanor hesitated, listened again, and then fluttered over to Foskett's side.

"Oh, captain!" she cried, "Mr. Hadlock has heard a call for help—a call just like that which comes from the Swiftstep!"

The skipper gained the rail with long steps and gave keen attention.

"I hear nothing," he announced, after a brief pause.

"It has died away now," returned the smooth-spoken Hadlock. "It was just abeam, and I caught those two words—'Help, help'!"

Foskett looked at his sails. Unsuspicious of the plot leveled at him, he doubted Hadlock's hearing, and was reluctant to lose headway even for a short time. When his gaze came down again it happened to rest upon Eleanor, and his decision was quickly made. He would not stop, but, by swinging to starboard, he could cover the spot pointed out by his passenger with small loss of time. He spoke to Eveleth and orders were duly given, so that the ship soon swung her bows and was moving to accomplish the investigation.

"Did you get any sound, Eveleth?" he asked.

"No, sir."

"I think Hadlock was mistaken, but—well, we'll try it."

"I think your ears are as good as his, and the lookouts report nothing."

"Well, well, we shall see," said the captain, irritably.

At that moment there was activity below that was not expected by shipmaster or crew. Mr. Jenkinson had lingered near the foot of the companion, alert to catch every sound, and when he heard orders given to shift the helm he acted with celerity.

Crossing the cabin light-footed, he reached and entered the captain's stateroom. Turning the slide of a dark-lantern, he had the beam of light dancing over the interior. It rested upon the safe, and he pulled at the door. As he had expected, it was locked.

Smiling softly, he set the lantern down and drew a curious implement from his pocket. Neither detective nor housebreaker would have recognized it as anything familiar, but Jenkinson was too good a workman to use ordinary tools when he could make better. He attacked the lock with nimble fingers, urging the point of the odd instrument into a crevice of the ancient safe.

"Listen, lad, and hear my tender call—
Home, come home from the siren sea;
Leave the love that slays as she laughs,
And haste to port and home and me."

He hummed the words of the old song merrily, feeling happier now that he was at more congenial work than he had been before since boarding the ship, and he smiled at the safe he was attacking so gayly. Perhaps it was because the lock was so old, or perhaps because his skill was so great, but the door swung back before his efforts, and its interior was revealed to him.

"I feel the ship circling," he mused, "so they will all be busy and leave me alone until I've had time—ah!"

He peered and lifted an object.

"The diamonds!" he murmured. "We will pass them by. Documents are wanted. What's this? Ship's manifest, alias list of goods in the cargo. Next, the so-called articles, signed by the seamen. They write like hens. Next, private letters, no use to me. Next, some kind of trash about—eh?"

He broke off short, a voice having stolen in upon his mutterings.

"Shall I watch while you hunt?"

Jenkinson leaped to his feet and stood facing Miss Prince. The angular maiden lady held herself prim and erect, and her face was stolid, but it was folly to think her brains were inactive.

"Somebody might happen on you, Mr. Jenkinson," she added. "Tell me where I shall watch?"

"Madame," replied the safe-breaker, as near flustered as was possible to him, "what the deuce do you mean?"

"It is dangerous for you to work alone. I will help you."

"Pray notice that I have done what I set out to do. The door of this Noah's contraption stuck fast, and as I'm a skilled artisan, the captain asked me to open it for him."

"Shall I go and tell him you have done it?"

Jenkinson eyed the lady critically. He had tried to mislead her, tho without his usual cunning, but her last words made it clear that she was not to be deluded.

"Madam," he finally returned, "life is a horribly short affair, so let's lose no minutes in idleness. Just what do you want?"

"My share of the diamonds!" replied the lady, steadily.

"Humph! Diamonds! An alias for lady's joy. Diamonds, eh? Do you know that, instead of being clean, trim, pretty little flashers, they are in the rough, otherwise uncut?"

"They can be cut."

"Risky!"

"Not in the least. Listen to me, sir. I am not a safe-breaker, I regret to say, but I am in need of money. What you want here I don't know, but my own desires are definite. For this occasion let us be confederates. Take what you want. Give me the diamonds—I mean, a few of them. We will not betray each other."

"Are you aware that, tho these stones are still crude, they are itemized to the minutest particular? So many of them, so many carats, as per this paper here.

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"Have you followed me? Six diamonds is my call?"

Jenkinson moved the light of his burglarious lantern upon the face of his companion, feeling miserably helpless for a man usually masterful. It was a plain, bony face, but full of determination. She was not to be threatened or persuaded, unless his judgment was at fault. There was no way of tossing her overboard, and whether he yielded or defied her he was liable to be exposed by one circumstance or another.

"Wait a bit!" he directed. "I am busy, just now."

He stooped and began fumbling at the remaining papers. Eager to get his hands upon a certain document, his mind turned somewhat in that direction, but more he gave heed to a troublesome question. What was he to do with Miss Prince?

CHAPTER XI.

STUDYING his dilemma carefully, Jenkinson examined the remaining papers in the safe without the least sign of nervousness. The one particular document he wanted was not there. He had risked a good deal without gain, and, worse yet, had a difficulty of no small nature to deal with later. He again closed the safe, and, as the key was not available, locked it with his burglarious implement as neatly as he had opened it. Then he rose and faced the stolid Miss Prince.

"Madam," he said, "shall we discuss our riddle in the cabin?"

"Have you locked that door, sir?" she demanded, suddenly awakening to the fact that his final movements had meant something not immediately understood by her.

"Yes," he answered quietly.

"And," she proceeded, her voice hardening, "shut in all the diamonds?"

"Madam, unless you want to spend some years in prison, drop all thoughts of the diamonds. If purloined, they would be missed before we make port, and search would reveal them in your possession——"

"I will take care of that!" she snapped. "I demand that you open the safe again. Do you hear me?"

"Yes, and others may do the same ——"

"You have bought up the steward."

"But not the captain, mates, or passengers. We shall soon be interrupted by somebody. Minutes are now precious. Do we save our skins or go to prison? If I follow you aright you are just taking your first try at lawless energy, so listen to a word from an old hand. To steal these stones now, itemized as they are, would be madness. I understand that you are short of cash. I've been that way, myself, before tonight, and know how to feel for you. If the loan of, say a couple of hundred dollars, would be of service to you——"

"When?"

"Madam, you stir the recollections of my earliest years. Nowadays, I never pay a confederate until I'm out of the woods. No loan now, Miss Prince, but when we are in port—why, a couple of hundred. But now, not a dollar. Call the captain, if you will."

He was risking everything on a hazard, but the lady had been thinking while he worked, and it was clear to her that reckless steps would do her more harm than good. Perhaps it was just as well not to purloin itemized diamonds. She, too, had been thinking about a cash payment, and when Jenkinson mentioned it she was ready to be convinced.

Too cautious to admit that she was weakening she debated the point a little further, but yielded at last. Then he came to another matter.

"Madam," he said "there is something for you to do to earn the two hundred, and if you do it well I'll give you, not hundreds, but two thousand dollars."

"What is it?"

"Somebody in this ship is the bearer of a document, a written sheet of paper folded so it is about six inches long and four wide. That person is carrying the paper to New Orleans, it being a secret, special trust. Learn who has the paper, and you shall have the two thousand. Do you take the chance?"

"What does the paper deal with——"

"Possibly an algebraic problem, or possibly something else. When I see it I can give more particulars."

Jenkinson evaded explanation with amiable politeness, and Miss Prince realized that nothing was to be gained by dwelling on the subject. His skill with words and his masterful force had been clear before. She dropped the discussion curtly.

"I'll do my best. We had better get on deck now."

"One word, please. Why did you suspect I had bribed the steward?"

"It was necessary, and I saw you motion him away from the cabin."

"I see I have no pygmy assistant, madam. Your mind and eyes are those of a born leader. Now, let us get on deck and see our men pick up the modern Mazeppa."

Miss Prince hurried away without reply, and Jenkinson followed more slowly. He smiled slightly, for he had no intention of ever sharing a cent of the expected plunder with her, but, really, he was not certain but that so brainy a woman would compel division. If that ever pressed upon him he would yield with easy grace. When he went up the companionway there was nothing left behind to betray the fact that a burglar had been active.

Having planned the scheme that Hadlock had brought to pass, the chief schemer was vastly amused when he saw the results. The Laugh of Day was tacking from point to point, and nearly every person on board was looking and listening eagerly. Most of them stood leaning forward over the rail, hand to ear, and trying to bring the derelict into sight or hearing.

"A touching spectacle," Jenkinson said softly to Hadlock. "Nothing is more admirable, nothing loftier than the desire of man to aid his fellow beings who are in distress."

The Swiftstep was not found, and when the effort was abandoned considerable time had been lost, but Hadlock expressed his regret with such grace that Captain Foskett was disarmed of irritation.

"Mistakes will occur," he remarked kindly.

"It is difficult for me to realize that I made a slip," returned Hadlock, "but it must be so. I fear that anxiety to rescue that man chained to the masthead has made me imaginative."

"Let us find our reward," said Jenkinson, amiably, "in knowing we have tried to aid a fellow man. That is a great comfort to people like us."

Once more the Laugh of Day was pointing her bows at Paramaribo, and slowly the passengers drifted below to their rest. Foskett, lying awake a short time before sinking into sleep, was within a few feet of his safe, but that non-communicative object had presented its usual bland, battered face when he prepared to extinguish the light, so he did not suspect what had happened there while he hunted for Mazeppa.

Eleanor was beset with periods of despondency the next day, tho she tried bravely to hide her feelings. The ship was going toward Paramaribo with a brisk wind astern, and no one was sanguine enough to predict that the derelict brig was off their bows. Undoubtedly, she was being left behind.

Once, in the forenoon, Foskett halted a passing schooner and offered its master money if he would devote his time wholly to hunting for the Swiftstep, but the stranger was loaded with perishable freight, and was unable to improve the

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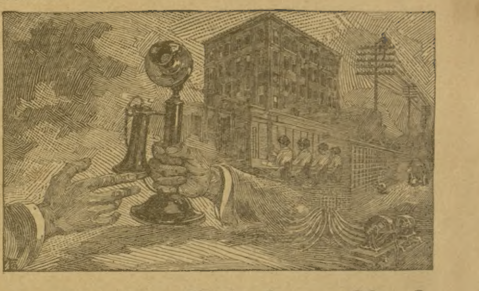

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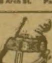

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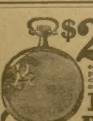

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chance. The derelict seemed to be left to her fate.

While everybody was thinking this, another change came abruptly. A sail was raised head on, and as she drew nearer Foskett nodded satisfaction.

"I know those bluff bows and stumpy masts," he said. "She is the Ready Rover, and her master is Jake Grinnell of Mobile. She was loading near us in Paramaribo, and is now bound for her home port. I must notify Jake of the blockaders, so I'll have a chance to tell him about the derelict and ask him to have his eyes open for her."

The plan was carried out, the two ships came within a few fathoms of each other, and Foskett was rowed to the Ready Rover. When he came back his expression was unusually thoughtful.

"We shall not see Dutch Guiana right away," he confided to Eveleth and the passengers. "Captain Grinnell informs me that a Northern warship was off his stern last night, and that he only escaped by good luck. He was making a fast run for Mobile, but my news has altered his plans. He will fetch to St. Thomas as soon as possible, to have the protection of the Spanish flag. What he told me changes my own plans. I mustn't run into that warship."

"Then what will you do?" asked Mr. Allen, bluntly.

"Run to Antigua, or possibly Barbuda, both being British territory. I'm going to save my cargo. This brings up a fresh point, like a wheel within a wheel. With that new warship yonder, I dare not lay a direct course for Antigua, so I shall shift my helm and sail back over the water we have just covered, shifting again at midnight and making for Antigua. Do you see what else this means?"

"It will take us back into the waters where we suppose the brig Swiftstep to be!" cried Eleanor.

"Right!" the captain agreed, smiling.

"Back to there!" she murmured. "I wonder if—well, I hope so!"

With her eyes dimming she looked toward where the Swiftstep was last seen.

CHAPTER XII.

ELEANOR and Martha sat together on deck, two hours later, watching the sea off the bows and talking fitfully. Chiefly, the former was wondering at the chance that kept the Laugh of Day in the same waters with the derelict brig. Twice the ship was leaving the region where the Swiftstep was making her leisurely way, and twice she had been turned back by unexpected events.

"It is Providence!" she mused, with a catch of her breath. "Man had no hand in it, and could not have planned so well. Providence has Irad in its keeping, and will surely bring us to the derelict eventually. She will be found, and then—but he has been so long without food or water! How—oh! how can he be alive?"

Hadlock approached, his manner half-apologetic.

"I hope I don't intrude," he said pleasantly.

"Certainly not," Martha answered, and Eleanor, glad to have her brooding thoughts diverted, echoed the assertion.

"Thank you," the young man said quietly. "I have been considering a plan, and want your opinion of it before speaking to Captain Foskett. He has tried to pay a vessel to search for the Swiftstep, and has asked various ships to keep watch, but direct effort is necessary."

"What can be done?" Eleanor asked.

"I shall propose to our captain that one of his boats be selected, equipped with sails, oars, and provisions, and manned by Pettley and the three other men taken off the sloop Getalong, with myself added, and that we sail in systematic effort to sight the derelict and her chained occupant. I brought this to Foskett's attention once before, but he said he had no right to lessen the number of his boats, with passengers aboard. Now, however, with his new idea of fetching to Antigua, he may be willing to strain a point. The run to the latter port will not be long."

"Splendid!" cried Eleanor.

"Humanity demands that it be tried."

"The plan will succeed. You will find the Swiftstep unless you meet with a dangerous squall—but I am forgetting you and the sailors. You may be lost at sea."

"For one, I'll take the risk. I'm no great sailor, but I've seen peril afloat and ashore before now. I'll take another risk. And you can be sure that Pettley and his mates won't refuse the chance to make money. I'll pay them something, and it's likely there is valuable salvage to be reaped from the Swiftstep. Ship and cargo are worth a good lot. Depend upon it, Pettley will catch at the chance."

"But," Eleanor urged, "if there is a severe squall or a gale——"

"If it comes while we're in the boat we'll try to fight it out. Don't worry about us. Fact is, the plight of that unfortunate fellow chained to the masthead stirs my sympathies deeply. Mazeppa of the sea! My recollection of the history of the original Mazeppa is dim, and I only recall that he was a man who, being captured by his enemies, was by them bound fast to the back of a fiery horse and sent adrift on the steppes of Russia. We don't want the man in the brig to meet with anything more that suggests his prototype than has already been his lot. He must be rescued."

Hadlock's voice was as compassionate as his words, and the girls regarded him with friendly eyes. He was always agreeable, modest, and companionable, and he added to his good standing now. Each mentally pronounced him a pleasing young man. Perhaps they would have been less certain of their judgment had they known that he had falsified when claiming to hear a call for help beyond the ship's beam, thus giving another man chance to burglarize the captain's safe.

When Foskett was approached with the plan he hesitated. If he parted with one of his boats, and disaster befell the Laugh of Day, lives might be lost that would be saved with the absent boat at hand.

"I'll look at the chart and think it over," was his only promise at that time.

He did not look at the chart, and did not need to, for the Caribbean waters were well known to him, but he rendered his decision in the second dog-watch.

"If you and Pettley want to risk it, you shall have the boat when I shift my helm at midnight," he said to Hadlock. "Not before. From that turning point to Antigua will be a simple run—unless we fall afoul of hostile vessels—so possibly I may venture to risk something. But you—have you looked at the sky?"

"Yes, sir," Hadlock replied.

"We shall have a black night. Just what more I can't tell. The barometer holds fairly steady, so I look for no great change, but I've had the mercury play tricks with me before now. Ours may fall like a bullet, and a squall spring up very suddenly. That will be bad for you."

"We'll hazard it, captain."

"Have you talked with Pettley?"

"Yes. He and his mates from the Getalong are eager. The hope of salvaging the Swiftstep appeals to them strongly, and they are ready."

"Humph!" muttered the captain, not wholly glad they were so willing.

"All we need is the boat. Now, sir, I would like the benefit of your advice. I understand you to say we are laying along the same course we were taking in the opposite direction when the derelict was last seen. Thus, she is slowly sailing toward us all the time. Isn't that so?"

"Not necessarily. We have had freakish winds in the Caribbean of late, else the Swiftstep would not have hung so closely to one vicinity. Mighty freakish! But that isn't all, Hadlock. To put it in clear, on-shore terms, it isn't at all likely the wind has blown in one direction all the way across the Caribbean. Far from it. Just now it comes from the northwest, but perhaps there is a different slant a few miles away, with the wind from due north or due west. Do you follow me?"

"Yes."

"Hence, the Swiftstep may now be sailing toward the south, or toward the east."

"Which would take her out of our course."

"That's it."

"Making our venture a gamble?"

"Exactly."

"For the sake of the man chained in the top that is to be regretted, but it doesn't change my wishes. Given your permission, we will go."

"Even if success awaits you, it may be a long, painful search."

"We'll risk that, too."

"If you succeed your share of the salvage will be rich——"

"I'll consider that when we have possession of the brig. Just now, my only interest is to save human life."

"Bless you, my lad! I hope you'll succeed!" cried the captain, heartily, and he shook his companion's hand with cordiality.

At that moment he was called away, and Jenkinson sidled up to Hadlock.

"Jimmy, boy," said the father, with admiration, "you are playing the game with concentrated rascality that makes me proud of you, but you certainly know the Swiftstep and her cargo are not worth the chances you would risk in this treacherous weather. Of course you don't intend to go, but how are you going to back out gracefully?"

"Leave that to me," Hadlock answered composedly.

"No, confide in me——"

"You will see, later."

"You always were a deep one, lad—it's in the blood—but you are a tadpole, not a full-grown frog. Tell me your scheme. I hope it doesn't menace the safety of this ship? If you scuttled her all hands would have to take to the boats, which possibly would give you your desired opportunity, but don't do it, Jimmy, don't do it! Remember that the heiress is here, and that you are courting her. Her, I say—not the other girl."

"Don't mix subjects," said the younger man, smiling.

"But your plan——"

"Wait and see!"

He walked away, leaving Jenkinson worried and restless. He chafed against the weakening of his hold upon his son, but saw no chance to prevent it. In a quieter way Jimmy was as stubborn as himself, and argument was useless.

"Something is going to happen tonight!" he mused. "Yes, but what?—what? I wonder, now, if he has started a mutiny here, and intends to seize this ship?"

CHAPTER XIII.

JENKINSON did not find anything to cheer him up in the hours that followed. Hadlock remained uncommunicative, tho apparently fixed in his plan to go in search of the derelict brig. The older man did not for a moment believe that he would go. It was unlike anybody with Jenkinson blood to take foolish risks for a stranger, and, in this case, the scheme for wealth that had brought father and son on board the Laugh of Day would be jeopardized, and probably ruined by the untimely departure of the latter.

Of course Jimmy was not going, but what was his game? Accustomed to

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We want Special Agents to travel by Motorcycle selling our

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We furnish each representative with a motorcycle free. This is no contest where only one person wins Write for particulars how you can get this motorcycle

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take part in ventures that defied the law, the father felt quite confident that there was to be a mutiny in the ship. Somehow, quiet Jimmy had stirred the sailors up to the necessary pitch, and the outbreak might take place any time.

Mr. Jenkinson hoped not. He did not like mutinies, for he had seen boon friends of his hanged for the same efforts. Mutiny, too, was going out of fashion. But, if not mutiny, what was Jimmy's game?

The son did not tell, tho several times beset by his elder, and matters hung in the wind. He began to suspect that his offspring had somehow passed the tadpole stage without his discovering it.

A lesser irritation was the fixed position of Eleanor and Martha at the bulwarks. They looked at the sea, watching for the new Mazeppa and his wooden steed, and their persistence was annoying. Confound Mazeppa of the sea! What a look of trouble that fellow was causing!

Night fell with the sky clear and a gentle wind on the starboard bow. The Laugh of Day was headed northwest, and seemed to be making for Jamaica, tho there was reason to believe she would not reach there. Wind favored, the heavens smiled with stars, and the water kissed the hull with gentle murmurs. A model night afloat!

Jenkinson saw all the passengers but himself in a group, and joined them, sidling past the unadmired Miss Prince and reaching close enough to Jimmy so he could nudge that gentleman's elbow, if desired.

To his disgust the talk was about Mazeppa. His strange situation chained in the foretop, his wonderful endurance when he had nothing to sustain him but the chain, and other relevant matters, were discussed. As Mr. Jenkinson sarcastically expressed it to himself, they were measuring the water he did not drink and weighing the food he had not eaten for an indefinite period.

He thought it idiotic, but it was not his way to be a nonentity in any conversation. He took up his part composedly, and hopefully, and his ability as a talker made him worth listening to then. All except Jimmy believed him to be a very kindly man, but this was a mistake. He was simply Jenkinson.

At nine o'clock Hadlock rose, yawned, and said he would get a little sleep before starting out to find Mazeppa. Going, he sent a look at his father, and the latter, having a womanlike gift for reading glances, knew that he was wanted. He followed, and joined Jimmy in the cabin.

"Don't think me over-mysterious," said the young man, with more amiability than usual. "I will soon let you know what I want to do. If matters go wrong I'm going to be alone in it—that is, I won't drag you into it. It seems best that you should be free from entanglements and so you can prove that fact, later, and help me. Trust me, sir!"

"I feel sure you have persuaded the sailors to mutiny——"

"Hush! The walls may have ears."

"Ha! So I have guessed it. Now, give me the details so that I——"

"Be content with what you know and suspect, sir. I'm taking no great risk."

"But you may endanger our scheme that took us to this ship."

"No."

"Remember that we want to share the hundred thousand dollars that is to fall to Miss Eleanor Goldsmith."

"I've not forgotten."

"And that we must find that certain document that will give us——"

"I remember that. Believe me, I forget nothing. Now, before I go to sleep, let's have a nip of spirits together. The captain has given me a couple bottles of prime brandy to take along with me in the boat, and as I've other accessories, I can compound a decoction after one of your recipes. Do I mix it, sir?"

"Proceed, Jimmy," said Mr. Jenkinson, his heart warming at this friendly talk.

Two draughts were compounded and swallowed.

"Now I'm for turning in," Hadlock pursued. "I want to sleep until eleven. Would you mind staying here so you can call me?"

Jenkinson did not mind, so, Hadlock disappeared, he sat down on a locker. Then he did some thinking. What was afoot with Jimmy? Why was that delightful rascal shutting him out of his plans? His only part was to wake him. The watcher yawned. Accustomed to being the head and front of all conspiracies, it was tiresome to have no more to do now than hold down a locker. He decided to go to his stateroom for a book, and went accordingly. Once there the berth looked so inviting that he thought he would lie down for five minutes—only five! He lay down and fell asleep with remarkable rapidity.

When he awakened he heard the slight creaking of deck-beams and bulkheads, but no steps on deck. The hour had that peculiarity belonging, not to early evening but to late night, and, startled, he sprang up, made a light, and looked at his watch.

He had slept the entire night thru, and morning must be showing on the sea. He ran into the cabin, flung back the door of Hadlock's room, and found it empty. He heard somebody stir slightly in another room, and the peace was not that of a night of mutiny.

Dismayed, he ran up the companionway and was on deck. He saw a slightly foggy prospect beyond the rail, but tho the deck-lights still blinked dully, the pallor of day was sifting thru the morning gloom.

Mate Eveleth was near, and he hastened to him.

"Where's Hadlock?" he demanded, a queer break in his voice.

"He went away at midnight, with Pettley and the others, to hunt for the derelict brig. We turned back then, and are now laying a course for Antigua."

"Ah-h-h!"

The long-drawn word was Jenkinson's only word, but it meant much. He went aside and leaned upon the rail with his face set and grim. He had been tricked. Jimmy had deceived him and gone hunting for a miserable fellow who had somehow got himself chained to a masthead in another vessel, and the act had a sting. Plainly, he had been drugged, and his long sleep was the result of that drink with Jimmy.

It was the most wretched hour of his life. Thru his years of living by his wits, his duplicity, scheming, relentless preying upon his fellow beings, and his absence of pity for those he made to suffer, he had retained composure outwardly and at heart. If he met with reverses he accepted them philosophically—but not now!

He cherished no delusions. Whether Jimmy had gone away in the boat to hunt for the chained man or for something else, he did not know, but he was certain that the step held nothing that would benefit or please him. Jimmy had broken away from him, and gone with a blow at parting.

Always a hard man to hoodwink, he had been deceived now with absurd ease. But why? Because he had never cared for any other human being, and had listened credulously when his treacherous son talked riddles. Jimmy was lost, and the barb was in his heart. It did not occur to him then, but he was tasting of the cup of sorrow he had pitilessly held to the lips of his dupes in the past. Crime had turned upon him, and taken his only son from him.

Eveleth, mechanically watching, at times, noticed the sag in the usually erect figure by the bulwark, but gave it no special thought. Presently he had something more important to think about.

(Continued on Page 22.)

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GATE

Rheumatism!

How is rheumatism recognized? Some have said—

Rheumatism is a dull pain.
Rheumatism is a sharp pain.
Rheumatism is sore muscles.
Rheumatism is stiff joints.
Rheumatism is a shifting pain.

All have declared—*Rheumatism is Pain.*

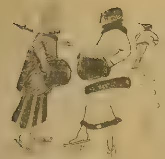
Sloan's Liniment applied:—

The blood begins to flow freely—the body's warmth is renewed—the congestion disappears—the pain is gone.

Sloan's Liniment

KILLS PAIN (GUARANTEED)

Rheumatism and allied pains yield to the penetrating qualities of this warming liniment.



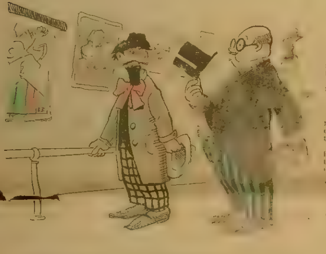
Bella—"Oh, yes, that's Jack. You know he just fell at my feet the moment he met me!"

Stella—"Stumbled over them, I suppose?"

A Steady Follower.

"And when you eloped with the girl," asked a friend, "did her father follow you?"

"Did he?" said the young man. "Rather! He's living with us yet!"



Daddy—"I notice that you lent [illegible] things a [illegible] them [illegible]"

[illegible] "[illegible] I couldn't part [illegible]"

Perfect Program.

The story has the merit of being true, anyhow: The official pessimist of a small Western city, a gentleman who had wrestled with chronic dyspepsia for years, stood in front of the [illegible] office as the noon whistles sounded.

"Twelve o'clock, eh?" he said, half to himself and half to an acquaintance. "Well, I'm going home to dinner. If dinner ain't ready, I'm going to raise h-ll; and if it is ready I ain't going to [illegible]."

Not Missed:

"There is no one," remarked a politician who has been a candidate for Governor of Missouri, "who can take the wind out of a fellow's sails so effectually as an old-time, leisurely Missourian. For example:

"After a twelve years' absence, during which I had graduated at the university, got my name in the paper a few times and bought a new suit of clothes, I went back to the little old country town where I had been a 'poor but ambitious youth.'

"I expected a reception committee to meet me; but it did not. However, seeing the grandeur of my new clothes and stiff hat, my old acquaintances came round and shook hands quite cordially—all except old Bill McClanahan, who kept the general store. Old Bill sat at the back of the stove, handy to the sawdust box. He never noticed me; didn't even glance my way.

"I was piqued, angry, in fact. I walked back to the stove and got right in front of my old friend, so that he had to look upon me in all my glory.

"Slowly, casually, he looked up from under the flap of his old white hat, and remarked:

"'Arthur, you been away somewhere, haven't you?'"

Her Awful Fear

Little Millie's father and grandfather were Republicans, and as election drew near, they spoke of their opinions with increasing warmth, to [illegible] Millie's attentive ears and [illegible]. One night [illegible] was praying [illegible] she whispered in a frightened [illegible] I don't [illegible] sure. I'm [illegible] there's a Democrat [illegible]

Wasn't That Kind.

"Oh, John!" exclaimed the better half of the combine, as her husband staggered upstairs in the early morn. "I did hope that you would swear off at the beginning of the New Year."

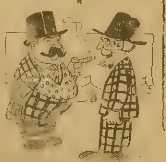
"Not on your (hic) tintype, m'dear," replied the jovial John. "I've got my (hic) faults, all ri', but betcher life I ain't no (hic) quitter."

Her Meaning Silence.

"Do you believe that silence gives consent, Dubbley?" asked Gosling.

"Why—yes. The old saying says so. Why?" said Dubbley.

"Then you may congratulate me on my engagement to Miss Moneybags. I wrote to her asking her to marry me six months ago, and I haven't heard a word from her since."—Judge.



Side Show Man—"How did you like the way our ventriloquist imitated the hive of bees?"

Subtle Rube—"Wal, I feel stung, all right."

The Scotch Moon.

All Scotchmen take pride in their native land but none more than the old gardener of Duddingston, of whom the following story is told.

The gardener was showing to a tourist the beauties of the loch and the little village [illegible] expatiated [illegible] country [illegible] of a speech and gazed at the [illegible] admiration.

At [illegible] he turned to the tourist [illegible] moon for [illegible] a grand [illegible]?"

Johnny's Effort.

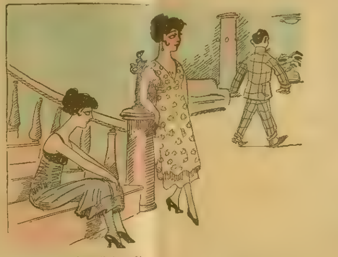
[illegible] can make [illegible] sentence and use [illegible] asked the [illegible] grade.

"You may tell us, Johnny," indicating a little boy whose hand was waving violently.

"The kitchen door was left open and in come a rat," was the triumphant reply.

March of Progress.

[illegible] of love in a cot- [illegible] way to incompatibility.



Ella—"Do you know that man?"

Stella—"No."

Ella—"Then why do you look at him so admiringly?"

Stella—"He once sat on my hat and crushed it into a perfectly lovely shape. It was so original, you know."

A Queer Time to Boast.

Two men sat on the river bank, fishing. One had a bite, and in the excitement he fell into the water. The other man watched his struggle, but did nothing to aid him.

"I can't swim!" shouted the man in the water. He went under, and when he came up he shouted again: "I can't swim!"

The man on the bank watched him with languid interest.

The man in the water sank again. When he came up he gasped: "I can't [illegible]"

"Well, my friend," commented the man on the bank, "this is a queer time to be boasting of it."

Could Fill the Bill.

He had told her the age-old [illegible] and, torn with emotion, waited for a few short words that would decide his fate.

"[illegible]," she said, "before I give you my answer you must tell me something. Do you drink anything?"

A smile of relief lighted his handsome countenance. Was that all she wanted to know? Proudly, triumphantly he clasped her in his arms and whispered in her shell like ear.

"Anything," he said.

Limousine With Heavy Tread.

He was wandering aimlessly around in a department store when the floorwalker approached him.

"Looking for something?" he asked.

"Yes, my wife," replied the man.

"Describe her."

"Well, she's a sort of a limousine with heavy tread and usually runs on low."

No Cats.

Visitor—"This is a fine collection, but I don't see any cats here."

The Attendant—"Is a cat such a wonderful curiosity?"

Visitor—"No; but it's some satisfaction to see a dead one once in a while."

Evidence.

He—Didn't it ever occur to you that [illegible] in love [illegible] you?

She—Certainly; [illegible] you ever [illegible] say [illegible]

Rather Busy.

Mother (to son who is still in bed, tho it is after ten o'clock)—"John, why don't you get up?"

John—"I haven't got time."

Went Easily.

Sympathizing Friend—"Didn't you find it hard to lose all your money?"

Hardup—"N, easiest thing in the world."

A Salesman.

The depression in business caused a local jeweler to discharge his experienced man, replacing him with a high-school graduate—a youth just out of school. He appeared very anxious to learn, and the proprietor at the end of the first week was much pleased with results. One day the merchant was obliged to be away from the store, and upon his return inquired:

"Well, Frank, did you sell anything while I was out?"

"Yes, sir; I sold five plain band rings."

"Fine, my boy!" said the jeweler, enthusiastically. "We'll make an A1 salesman out of you one of these days. You got the regular price for them, of course?"

"Oh, yes, sir. The price on the inside was 18c., and the man took all that were left, sir."

The Cynic.

Dr. Clarence H. Neymann, of Martin Grove, Ill., has returned home after serving for almost a year with the German Red Cross.

"Some people declare," Dr. Neymann said, "that the Germans are now friendly to America. Well, toward such a declaration as that I'm rather cynical. I'm like the man who was visiting in the West.

"'Ten years ago,' a Western mayor said to this man joyously—'ten years ago'—and he waved his hand out over the roofs—'there was no town here at all.'

"'Hump,' said the visitor. 'Hump, and what makes you think there's one here now?'"

No Joke.

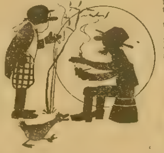
"We begin the publication of the Roccay Mountain Cyclone with some phew diphphiculties in the way. The type phounders phrom whom we bought our outphit phor this printing ophphice phailed to supply us with any ephs or cays and it will be phour or phive weex bephore we can get any. We have ordered the missing letters, and will have to get along without them until they come. We don't lique the loox ov this variety ov spelling any better than our readers, but mistax will happen in the best regulated phamilies, and iph the ephs and the cs and x's and q's hold out we shall ceep (sound the C hard) the Cyclone whirling aphter a phashion till the sorts arrive. It is no joque to us—it's a serious aphphair.

A Matter of Locality.

Mr. Tom Wing, M.P. for the Houghton-le-Spring Division, tells a good story of an encounter with a private of the Wearside Brigade of Artillery.

"I hope they have made a man of you," said the genial M.P. to the private, and he received the reply:

"I will tell you what they have done. They have taken the bump off my back and put it on my chest, and it's now much easier to carry."



"Do you have much society about here?"

"Wall, no. Ye see, since they've had rural delivery we never git a chance to sit around the postoffice any more."

Millie Had "Bitten."

She was a little girl and very polite. It was the first time she had been on a visit alone, and she had been carefully instructed how to behave.

"If they ask you to dine with them," papa had said, "you must say, 'No, thank you; I have already dined.'"

It turned out just as papa had anticipated.

"Come along, Mildred," said her little friend's father, "you must have a bite with us."

"No, thank you," said the little girl with dignity; "I have already bitten."

Wanted to Raise Some.

Mr. Highseed (from Worcester, in Italian restaurant)—"Say, Si, this here spaghetty's all right, ain't it?"

Mr. Meddergrass—"You bet! When I git home I'm a-goin' tew write tew our Congressman fer a package o' the seed, so's I kin raise it fer myself."

All for Fifteen Shillings!

Recently there appeared in a London newspaper an advertisement for an experienced insurance clerk, wages fifteen shillings a week. The advertiser got a lot of sarcastic letters, like the following, and he deserved them, too:

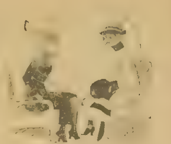
"Dear Sir:—I would respectfully apply for the position you offer. I am an expert in insurance in all its branches. In addition, I converse fluently in Gum, Arabic, Gorgonzola, Zola, and Billingsgate. I write shorthand, long hand, left hand and right hand. I can supply my own typewriter if necessary, and I may mention that I typewrite half an hour in ten minutes, the record for Great Britain. I would be willing also to let you have the services, gratis, of my large family of [illegible] agreeable to you, my wife would be pleased to clean your office regularly without extra charge. The cost of postage for your answer to this application can be deducted from my salary. Please note that if you have a back yard I could make bricks in my spare time."

Puzzling.

"Tomorrow," announced 5-year-old Sidney proudly to his kindergarten teacher, "is my birthday."

"Why," returned she, "it is mine, too."

The boy's face clouded with perplexity, and, after a brief silence, he exclaimed, "How did you get so much bigger'n me?"



May—"Does your husband ever quarrel with you?"

Ethel—"Goodness, no! John is too much of a gentleman to quarrel with a lady! He goes out and slams the door!"

The Brute!

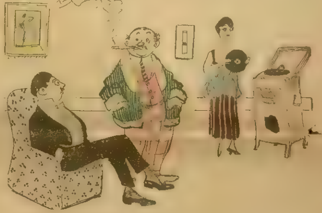
"See, darling," and Mrs. Justwed held up for her husband's gaze three mirrors arranged so as to give as many reflections, "I can get a triple view of myself!"

"Humph!" gurgled her brute of a man, struggling with his collar. "You seem to be quite popular with yourself!"—Judge's Quarterly.

No Arguments.

"Any war experts in this community?" asked the new arrival.

"No," answered the native. "We're all tollerbul friendly hereabout."



"Your daughter seems to be very fond of music."

"Yes; very. She never buys any but the most expensive records."

The Contrary Sex.

Mark Twain, so the story goes, was walking down the street when he met a woman with her youthful family.

"So this is the little girl, eh?" Mark said to her, as she displayed her children. "And this sturdy little urchin in the bib belongs, I suppose to the contrary sex."

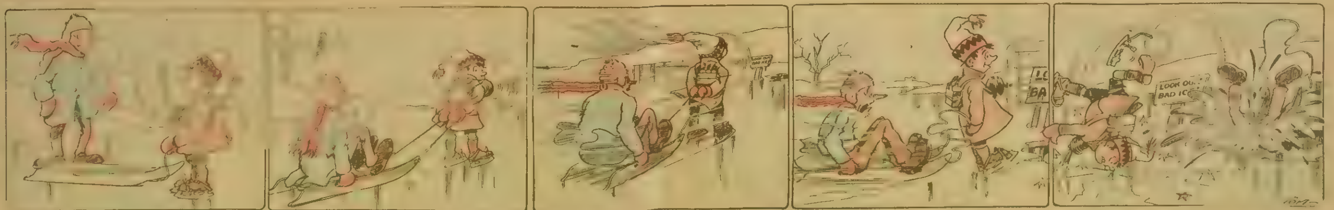
"Yassah," the woman replied; "yasah, dat's a girl, too."

An Ill Wind.

"Cheer up, old boy," advised the married man. "You know 'tis better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all."

"Yes," agreed the rejected suitor, jingling a bunch of keys in his pocket, "better for the florist, the confectioner, the messenger boy, the restaurant waiter, the taxicab man, the theatrical magnate, and the jeweler."

Billy Bonehead's Great Idea



[illegible] Paw, an' let me pull ye [illegible] in your born days.

"[illegible] see, Paw, I took the motor an' propeller off my aeroplane an' fixed 'em into a harness so I could use 'em when skatin'."

Paw—"Look out, ye snub-nosed bonehead, look out fer that hole!"

Billy—"That's all right, Paw, I can stop 'er right quick jest by reversin' the motor."

"See there, I stopped dead still not more'n a foot from the hole!"

Paw—"Yes, ye saphead, but what will stop me?"

Billy—"Excuse me, Paw, I never sled! Woof! Oh, my head!"

A Wolverine Lumberjack

Or, My Lady of the Wilderness

By Mason Ray

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CHAPTER XVI (Continued).

IMMEDIATELY after the ice storm violent thaw-winds broke loose the thick ice-covering of Muskrat Lake. A large opening appeared that widened until the wind was driving the floe hither and yon. With incredible swiftness the great slabs pulverized into myriads of glistening pencils, or shoved into immense piles on lee shores. By the third day blue ripples danced joyfully over the entire surface, the rollway men commenced to break down the immense piles of logs and, wading in hip-high gum boots, "dogged" together enormous rafts in readiness for the Indian Queen.

Four miles across the big basin the Company's great mill started into resonant, booming life, with smoke plume obeying the breeze at the height of the wire-guyed smokestack. Brinkley had charge of the lumber-shovers in the yard and at the Lake Michigan dock where barges loaded and where the slow, horse-propelled tram cars deposited lumber. Day and night, manned by separate crews, the great modern mill converted logs into a river of down-sliding yellow boards. Day after day, from dawn till late at night, the Company's busily puffing tug plied back and forth, bringing sinuous, trailing rafts to the greedy boom. Thru long hours Bill Hyde—black-haired, black-eyed, with a double-jointed back-action temper and the humor of a wag—stood at [illegible]. His one-man crew, Bud Hatch, red-haired and hot-tempered, stoked slabs in the rear hold and ran the engine.

Floyd, as manager of the triple interests, was in constant action. Steel and Hawley depended on his supervision to see that no pause occurred in the mighty machinery of their lumbering plant. Added to this was his vigilance in watching for some tangible proof that two of the Company's employes were implicated in the murder of Brett. After succeeding, he would carry war into the enemy's camp, and discover if either Steel or Hawley had guilty knowledge of the assassination and log-spiking. He trusted that the criminals would make some false move. So the manager and tally man compared notes and waited.

"The pond will be cleaned out in an hour," Brinkley yelled at Floyd, in passing. "If Bill don't bust that boiler o' hisn we'll have to lay off. Tell him to rush the next tow."

The harassed manager consequently waited on the slab pier for the arrival of the deliberate Indian Queen and her desired raft. On this particular morning the hill-encircled lake, with its two basins, was a dream of beauty. Its burnished surface duplicated the budding forest in prismatic tints; the white hull of the advancing tug showed in the still water like the inverted picture on the camera screen. The throbbing of her engine came in pulsing beats on the quiet air. Four miles away smoke rose almost vertically from the Blair Mill, and the thunder of breaking rollways echoed among the hills.

"Put on more steam," Floyd called thru the funnel of his hands.

Immediately the black head of Bill Hyde protruded from the wheelroom window, and his deep bass yelled profanity toward the one-man crew. Almost simultaneously a flame-colored [illegible] at the low opening to the engine pit and hurled abuse at the captain. The double discharge seemed to have effect; imperceptibly the tug gained in pace, and the combined puffing of steam and swearing of captain and crew neared until Floyd could give further orders.

"Have the next tow back inside of an hour, Bill," he directed. "We must rush timber the next ten days. I'll send extra men back with you to the rollways. Pile on steam and get there!"

"Then give me an engineer," Hyde yelled with an oath. "I can't hustle the tug with a dod-blasted wooden imag in the hold!"

From the engine-pit uprose a smut-blackened face surmounted by red hair in grotesque tufts of disorder and two blazing eyes of astonishingly clear blue.

"Put a man up front, and I'll run her like a scared Injun!" shouted Bud Hatch, with an accompanying string of invectives. "Gimme double pay, an' I'll chuck that dashed chromo overboard an' run her myself!"

Jim Sprik, Paul Duff, and several other men waiting to transfer the raft to the log pond laughed. Captain Hyde's chronic quarrel with his engineer furnished the water-front amusement. Every man on shore was well aware that neither captain nor the one-man crew would work apart. If either had been relieved from duty, the successor would have been obliged to quit in self-protection. This was understood by Floyd, who merely gave his order then returned to the mill-yard.

"Get together a loading gang," he told Brinkley. "The Minnetonka is due in an hour."

Brinkley immediately called a dozen outside lumber-shovers, and started across the intervening distance to the Company's big dock. The crew moved with leisurely tread that seemed lacking in energy. All timber workers act with deliberation, but their steady force masses into an enormous total of accomplishment. This was illustrated when they arrived at the lumber-filled pier and began the task of filling the cavernous hold of the barge, Minnetonka.

"Get a move on your men, Brinkley," called the barge captain from his station on deck. "If we get away by noon-up, I'll add five cents an hour to the pay."

"We'll have you loaded on time, Cap," Brinkley assured him.

Already a steady stream of lumber was sliding into the hold. Men on lumber piles were handing down boards with an easy swing that told of long experience, and others conveyed it to the slide with firm, unfaltering tread. Mann was busied tallying the lumber that went on board. Pile after pile was swallowed by the insatiable monster, as the amount of each was noted in the tally sheets. Not one of that busy throng gave a thought to the wide expanse of Lake Michigan rippling miles away to the twin islands outside the bay, or to the golden bank of giant sand dunes circling in either direction to the horns of the fresh-water gulf.

By nine o'clock the last plank slipped down the slant to the barge's deck, lines were cast off fenders, the black hulk of the Minnetonka churned out in the open, then started northward with a "bone in her teeth," as she cut heavily thru the dark water.

Long after the lumberjacks scattered townward, Mann stood at the slip watching the barge's disappearing lights and the half-circle of new moon with its attendant star. The tranquillity of the scene held him spellbound. At his right glimmered the lights of Agache thru its sheltering grove of pine. About him was the dreamlike mystery of a still night. Nothing was heard but the low lapping of ripples against the wharf; certainly not the stealthy footfall of a shadow-like form that inch by inch crept to the man idly gazing. With lynx-soft tread the murderer's bare feet passed over the intervening space between the sheltering phalanx of lumber piles to the unsuspecting victim.

At last he made a silent rush and planted two forceful palms between the shoulders of the dreamer. Instantly the tally man shot forward, then down into two fathoms or more of icy water. Like a plummet he sank without cry for aid or knowledge of what had wrought him evil. Above him on the dock Stimson paused a moment to peer over the edge, then he picked up his abandoned shoes and rushed down the pier and into the grove of pine. Here he thrust his feet into the boots, then sped on until he mingled with the lumber-shovers in the Company's store. A keen glance showed that none guessed he had not been with them from the first. He moved about from group to group making certain that—welcome or not—they noted his presence. Ridman, joking with purchasers, handed out plugs of tobacco and whipped cord about parcels with his usual celerity.

"Hello, Stimson," he called, "what kept you? Been moon-gazing?"

The chance shot sent Stimson swearing to Nordyke's office. For the barest fraction of a second the bookkeper glanced at his accomplice with slightly elevated brows; in the same space of time the swamper replied by a nod. The last waiting lumber-shover accepted his check and passed out. Nordyke then made out an additional slip and handed it to Stimson.

"Now, go," he flashed. "Get out among the men. Keep out of my office."

Stimson sullenly obeyed, and presently joined a group setting out for Buck Bender's saloon. This resort swarmed with lumberjacks. Some had stopped in with the checks lately handed out by the bookkeeper; they knew Bender would cash them in return for a certain amount of patronage over the bar. Two card tables were in full swing, and in a corner Jim Sprik lay doubled up, too drunk for appearances, yet entirely too sober for transference to a rear room.

Ben Heald, Watson, Bateman, Hilliker, and Bat Davitt—who had finished his first week driving team after his recovery—handed pay checks to the proprietor and were accommodated with currency less the price of their score. Haywire Hank next strode to the bar and handed out a slip which Bender good-humoredly cashed. To the amazement of the company, Hank coolly pocketed his currency with the exception of a coin which he pushed toward Bender.

"That's for your bother," he explained.

"Set up the drinks," several disappointed lumberjacks demanded.

The word roused Sprik. His liquor-inflamed mind saw justifiable excuse for battle. With a bound he was at Hank's elbow. The next moment he landed a blow that almost toppled the astonished top-loader to the floor.

"That's to teach you manners!" he yelled. "No one but a d—d hog 'ud refuse drinks!"

"By Judas, you've swilled down more 'en you orter have now, an' I ain't a-goin' to turn you inter a whisky jug!" squeaked Hank, in his rising and falling treble.

He shoved Jim back, but the young lumberman commenced to fight desperately, calling Davitt to aid. Instantly Davitt stepped forward, but his object was pacific. He attempted to pull his friend back to his corner until either partially sober or peacefully drunk. His act was misunderstood. The combatants redoubled their efforts—Sprik believing he was assisted, and Hank thinking he confronted two opponents. In the fury of a three-sided contest the actors caromed against Stimson as he entered. With blind impartiality Sprik landed a blow at the swamper's defenseless head, and followed it with a vicious punch in the stomach. Stimson, blinded by pain, saw Davitt, and let loose the vials of his wrath.

"You let me alone, d—n you!" he shouted. "If you don't you'll need that nigger doctor! It'll be a broken head 'stead o'——"

But at the word Bat Davitt's fighting instinct routed his new-born love of peace. With a rush he landed a blow that dropped Stimson backward like a ninepin. The swamper's weight carried a card table down with a crash, scattering the pasteboards and causing the interrupted players to spring to their feet. The next instant Davitt's lately healed limb was bent above Stimson's chest; his powerful hands reached for the swamper's throat, but as his grip fastened he saw the last [illegible] gray, the [illegible] instinctively turning [illegible] footed [illegible] nothing but Forest [illegible] outcome. In that [illegible] it was observed that the [illegible] as if he had walked hours [illegible] rain. The next moment the teamster renewed his chastisement.

"If I ever hear that word from you or the likes of you, you'll eat dirt; hear me? There shan't nobody insult a lady. You bottle that up to think about, or no doc 'ud ever find enough o' you to patch; understand?"

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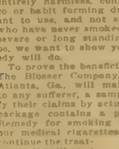
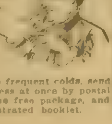
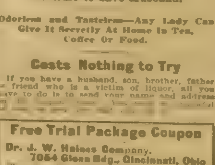




Since John Quit Drinking

By John's Wife



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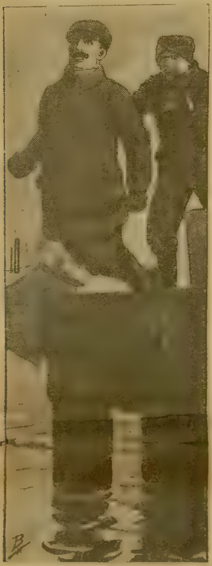
Men pulled Davitt from his victim in time to see Sprik and Hank similarly parted. The lank top-loader was breathless, and perspiration beaded his tranquil countenance.

"Neow," he declared, with convincing emphasis, "I'm a-goin' to set an' rest myself; an' I ain't a-goin' to buy no gol darn likker lessen I've a mind to!"

Which program he carried out with no further interference. Even Sprik, when sobered to the reflecting point by application of cold water, made no comments on Hank's stubborn policy of abstinence.

Stimson, meanwhile, continued to stare furtively at the astounding apparition that confronted him. He was well aware that Mann was unable to swim, yet here the scaler stood drinking a hot sling, and seemed little if none the worse for his cold plunge over the edge of the long pier.



The tally man shot forward.

The explanation of the tally man's appearance was exceedingly matter-of-fact. He had managed in his death struggle to clasp the slimy base of one of the wharf piles. To climb upward on the wave-soaked timber was impossible; even as he circled the slippery beam he felt that his water-clogged clothing and the paralyzing effect of the ice bath were slowly but surely drawing him back beneath the dark water. Hoarding every ounce of strength, he clung to his treacherous support; bitterly he regretted that swimming had been omitted from his athletic course of training.

He was too much in love with life—and India Blair—to die uselessly. Absorbing interests filled every waking thought; he wished to live, but with his intellect abnormally active and his body vigorous with health, he seemed hopelessly doomed. There was no doubt in his mind as to the author of his misfortune. Not a glimpse of the assassin had come to him during that fatal thrust, but he had no need of sight; there was but one man in that region who wished his death. The enemy's face was clearly photographed on his brain, but the entire reason for this enmity was not so evident.

Helplessly sinking into the flood, he sent forth call after call for chance assistance. None in the neighborhood were likely to hear his cry unless fortune intervened. The buildings of Agache were too distant for aid. None but a straggler in the grove of pine could hear, and this happening was beyond thought. At last he heard the distant muffled sound of oars evenly smitting the still water and creaking in their locks. Nearer and nearer the lone boatman approached, until he heard Mann's shout. The oarsman was a huge, powerful, but white-haired native of a province of Germany. His portly figure, merry blue eyes, and eccentric character were equally famous thruout the land as his quantities of netted fish. His rolling gait and fish-scented clothing were familiar to every man, woman, and child in the settlement and town. Fish was his main diet, his chief thought, and his constant topic of conversation in deep-toned dialect. His present errand was to visit Agache for a supply of salt. No precious hour of the following daytime was to be wasted in securing this needful commodity; therefore "Uncle Joe" was leisurely pulling his fish boat toward the source of supplies. The astonishing sound of a call for help brought him around the end of the dock instead of continuing to the wide beach.

"Mine Gott, young man!" he ejaculated, as he reached the almost drowning tally man. "Vy dond't you swim py der shore?"

"I promise you that if you'll help me this time I'll certainly know how to swim ashore next time."

"Vy, you're vetter 'en a feesh!" Uncle Joe declared, as he assisted him aboard. "Now, young feller, you hustle by der saloon and swallow down a whisky sling to drive der cold out. And run like a whitehead to warm up der blood. See?"

Mann only stopped to offer his deliverer a scornfully repulsed wet greenback, which he then adroitly slipped under a sail rope, before he acted on Uncle Joe's advice.

In this manner Stimson was confronted with the apparition of the man he had received pay for dropping into deep water. The only pleasant feature in the whole transaction was the fact that once more there was no proof against him. Even Uncle Joe supposed the scaler had awkwardly slipped and fallen.

"Get an Injun to learn you to swim once," Uncle Joe had advised. And the scaler had answered:

"I will!"

CHAPTER XVII.

BOB STRAY'S convalescence soon merged into robust health. Aunt Sally's wholesome cooking and Madeline's unceasing care had the desired effect. His hostess forgot her own grief in commiseration for the lad's condition. His memory-loss aroused the physician's interest. She believed a slight operation would relieve the brain pressure that caused the entire trouble. Her study took the direction of skull contusions and their effect. In the end she was certain that Bob might have opened the closed door of the past. When she finally talked with him of this possibility his eyes grew misty with affectionate gratitude.

"I'd do anything for a chance," he declared. "I'd undergo any operation; the longing of my life is to know—to remember who and what I am."

"When you're entirely strong," she told him, "we'll have the surgeon, Dr. Monroe, over from The Bay. We'll lift that bit of depressed bone above the temple. It may help; at least it won't harm."

The elusive past tormented him with suggestions that were short of being memory; names, places and people came almost within his grasp, then faded like a half-forgotten dream. Day after day he found himself unconsciously performing acts that were the involuntary movements of a former period

Mann was told of Mrs. Brett's design.

"We should have thought of that before," he commented.

As he studied Bob's eager face he was again impressed with the familiar lines of the lad's countenance. The likeness to some person he had known haunted him persistently, but no link in memory's chain hinted who this might have been. The unbidden thought came to mind that the return of Bob Stray's memory might mean his own undoing. Well, he'd risk it. Perhaps by then his task of uncovering Stimson's guilt would be finished. He would remain at his post whatever the result. This test of surgery was not imminent. Bob's health was to be rebuilt, and the spring term of school claimed Madeline's attention.

In early May she wended her way each day thru a scene of rural beauty. The boundless forest became tinged with freshest green; at the base of trees on a background of the last year's russet leaf-fall were countless blossoms; clustered hepatica of every tint elbowed the pure white heart-shaped flowers of the squirrel corn; at the roadside the flaming adder-tongue preceded the thousands of snow-white trilliums that starred the forest and fields. Wild plum and cherry blossoms waved their white plumes along the fences; small orchards by settlers' homes burst into pink bloom, while everywhere the velvet green of meadow grass seemed buttoned firmly to earth by myriads of yellow dandelions.

The teacher found—as the director predicted—that the summer work was a sinecure. All the larger boys and many of the older girls were employed on the farms. A few new pupils—girls—came from distant homes. The duties of each day were heart-filling; Madeline eased her own grief by the loving regard she lavished on these young people of the wilderness. Zoe Higbee was the one discord amidst harmony. Bereft of the masculine admiration she craved, nothing else mattered. Her time was openly idled away, while she dreamed of future conquests. No appeal to her ambition aroused her to effort. Lily May, by contrast, applied herself with diligence. Her heart was set on passing the teachers' examination for winter schools. With this steadily in view, she almost lived at Mrs. Brett's side

Time sped by until July was ushered in with its luxuriant foliage and riot of roses in the settlement gardens. The great American holiday was at hand, with its daytime picnics and public ball at Agache. Lily May had talked of it for days, but her mind was troubled with the old problem that had perplexed her kind for ages.

"I do wish," she confided to Madeline, as the two walked home under canopy of green, "that I had a pretty dress. I never had a real nice gown in my life."

"Come home with me this evening, and I'll cut over one of my white lawns. I'll never use it," she declared, glancing down at her black. "I'd be glad to do this; if you like we'll go by your home and ask permission of your mother."

"You don't know," Lily cried, with her blue eyes shining like stars, "how I've longed for a white dress!"

The two threaded the wood path that was a short cut to the May dwelling. About them were the musical sounds of midsummer. Near and far the thrush trilled the liquid notes of his whirling song. At the open fields of the May clearing a scarlet tanager flitted from tree to tree like a brilliant flame; corpulent robins tamely stalked across the meadow or gave little abrupt runs that ended in short flights. At the log-built cabin Mrs. May met them at the door, heard their request, and gave instant and pleased consent.

"Lil ain't had no chance to make nothin' of herself, Mrs. Brett," declared the mother. "I'm thankful that you favor her. She's my one hope, Lil is; my boys don't amount to much, an' I don't look to 'em, but my Lil's goin' to be something to be proud of. And I thank you for your interest."

"About this ball," hesitated Madeline. "I suppose it's a suitable place for Lily, or you wouldn't wish her to go."

"She's crazy to go," admitted Mrs. May. "But it can't be no harm; all the best folks are there—Miss Blair an' the store clerks an' the bookkeeper an' Mr. Mann. Besides, Lil goes with her brothers. She's well cared for."

Being assured that all was right, Madeline plunged into the delightful task of converting her lace-trimmed frock into a ravishing gown for the girl, who watched the transformation with sparkling eyes.

Finally the dainty costume was completed, with other garments to correspond. Tremblingly Lily May fastened the last hook, and came forth for the artist and Aunt Sally to admire. She

(Continued on Page 17.)

CURED HIS RUPTURE

I was badly ruptured while lifting a trunk several years ago. Doctors said my only hope of cure was an operation. Trusses did me no good. Finally I got hold of something that quickly and completely cured me. Years have passed and the rupture has never returned, although I am doing hard work as a carpenter. There was no operation, no lost time, no trouble. I have nothing to sell, but will give full information about how you may find a complete cure without operation, if you write to me, Eugene M. Pullen, Carpenter, 642B Marcellus Avenue, Manasquan, N. J. Better cut out this notice and show it to any others who are ruptured—you may save a life or at least stop the misery of rupture and the worry and danger of an operation

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USEFUL, ENTERTAINING BOOKS; CIRCUlar free. Marriageable ladies' names, 1,200, 25c. Opeal, Flandreau, S. D.

A Wolverine Lumberjack

(Continued From Page 15.)

was indeed a radiant vision; her sunny hair was tied with ribbons of the same azure as her dancing eyes; her fair, dimpled cheeks, her slight form seemed ethereally beautiful, thus enhanced by the purity of her white attire. The slight opening among the laces at her milk-white throat, the exquisite lines of the tastefully designed gown and the girl's expression of ecstatic happiness formed a vision of loveliness.

"Looks jes' lak yo' did in yo' first party gown, Miss Liney," declared the cook. "Looks jes' lak an angel outen de glory-lan'."

Madeline's delighted gaze expressed her pleasure. She folded the girl in her arms and tenderly kissed the dimpling face.

"It is grand, Mrs. Brett," Lily declared, tearfully grateful. "I'm so happy over the beauty of it I could die!"

"Nonsense," laughed Madeline, "you'll want to live and enjoy it!"

As she spoke, the evening stillness was broken by the weird call of a whip-poor-will and his distant, answering mate. Over and over repeated the swiftly uttered, "Whip-poor-will! whip-poor-will!" and afar came the fainter refrain, "Whip-poor-will! whip-poor-will! whip!" ending on the third syllable with a sharp accent.

"Har dat?" demanded Sally. "Har dat bird o' ill omen chucklin' ober comin' misery to some pore soul?"

"Nonsense!" again ejaculated Madeline. "That night bird is as innocent of evil as a robin."

At the Blair home a gown of similar hue to Lily May's, but garnished with ribbons of cardinal, awaited its owner on India's dressing-table. India herself was still engaged with the mill accounts in the little office. Her dark eyes scanned rows of figures with accurate speed, but her subconscious mind was differently engrossed. She wondered if that night would bring to Mann's lips the words she longed to hear. His so-called accident on the pier had brought to the surface all the deep tenderness of her nature. Despite his attempt to make the matter appear trivial, she divined the truth. She now unreservedly gave him her unshaken devotion, and felt unaccountably angry that he delayed acceptance.

After finishing her work, India stepped out in the open air and walked toward the river. She wished to be alone to ponder the question that perplexed her waking thoughts. The hour was still early. She had time for a stroll before dressing in gala raiment for the ball. Night sounds gave a note of cheer. The winding river, coming thru its gorge from among the hills glimmered between its banks; overhanging cedars were reflected in rich shadow on its surface. The soft twilight added a last touch to the enchanting scene. Charmed by the beauty around her, India stood watching the moving sheen of water, when a light step warned her that she was not alone. Glancing up, she saw that Nordyke, faultlessly garbed and handsome, stood beside her.

"This river scene—and you—are both attractive," he smiled. "But I'm here to see you, the jewel, not the setting." She saw by the light of his dark eyes what was coming, and would have escaped if chance permitted. He had followed her down the river path, determined boldly to declare his passion. Without an instant's deviation from his purpose he plunged into the midst of a declaration of love. The words came rapidly, skilfully, forceful with feeling.

"I've waited months," he ended, "for this opportunity. I knew that you were well aware that I'd give my soul for your favor. Don't answer; don't distress me and do injustice to us both. Withhold your judgment until you've considered. I've waited long, and I [illegible] for happiness."

He paused a moment to note the smoldering anger in her almost black eyes. He heard her emphatic denial of his suit, but with a silencing motion of his hand he turned and disappeared around a bend of the river.

The hall above the Company's store filled early with a joyous, laughing crowd. Windows were opened to the soft summer air; fabrics of thin material and light tints gave another expression of the season. The home talent orchestra was already filling the room with lively strains, and Hod Elwin "called off" for the dancers, while he noted the appearing faces of newcomers at the stair-head.

India Blair, regally beautiful in her white gown of firm texture brightened with dashes of cardinal, was going thru the figure with the broad-shouldered, dignified scaler. Mann, with his grave eyes of dark blue, had never appeared to better advantage. India quietly noted this with a satisfied sense of ownership. She was glad this man loved her, even if he unaccountably delayed the expression of this delightful truth. At one moment India was wroth that another had dared to approach her because this lover dallied; the next she found herself wondering with a sudden heart-throb if the delayed proposal would come during the home drive.

When Nordyke entered the ballroom he glanced about for India. He wondered if his practical wooing would have reward. Surely the girl would see that her worldly affairs needed his guiding hand, even as he had suggested. She loved success; in time she'd summon him to her side that his powerful supervision might straighten out the Blair difficulties and place the business on a firm basis. The flash of her scornful eyes had not encouraged hope, yet he looked forward with confidence to her decision. As he inspected the moving throng, his gaze encountered Lily May. Instantly his brows elevated with amazement. He could scarce believe that this beautiful vision was the timid, shrinking child he had favored with attention. He at once went to her side and requested the next dance. His black eyes devoured her loveliness, and his lips uttered words of praise. The girl's long lashes drooped before his ardent love-making, but her cheeks dimpled with smiles. Never before in her brief life had she been so exquisitely happy. Her dark lover's words praised her beauty and lavished endearment; they said nothing of a future, but Lily thought herself fortunate to have gained the devotion of one so eminently above her, and she believed his love enduring.

"She's like the roses at her waist," he thought, "lovely tonight, but hideous with age."

India could not avoid Nordyke all evening, despite her repugnance at being in his vicinity. The violins had struck up a rhythmic waltz when he peremptorily requested a dance, and she had no excuse to offer. The next moment they were keeping step, and he was at liberty to speak. The nearness of the girl's proud, flushed face, the flash of her glorious eyes, the strong vitality emanating from her lithesome form, hurried him to indiscretion.

"I must know tonight if you'll marry me," he breathed. "Answer now."

"Never!" she answered as they reversed in the waltz. "You knew that before."

"But I love you," he urged. "I love you and you need me."

"I've tried to make you understand. What you ask will never be."

"Better take a man who urges his suit than one who doesn't know his mind," Nordyke said, in sudden anger.

India looked into his eyes and laughed. The laugh was insolent and the eyes scorn-filled and fearless.

"When I wish to marry you, Mr. Nordyke," she said curtly, "I'll send for you and let you know." With the last word she disengaged herself from his light clasp, nodded a gay adieu, and was gone.

When India Blair and her escort started homeward the lake lay like burnished silver in the gray dawn. As they circled its irregular shores, it seemed part of a heavenly vision. The night was still save for the musical chorus or organ-like bass of frogs in shallow swales near the water's edge. The girl's anger at the man who had urged her to marry him for financial gain was now directed toward herself for wishing this dilatory lover to speak. Mann felt her mood without guessing its possible cause, and found less trouble than he anticipated in restraining himself from open speech.

India bade him good night at the gate, and sought her room with her mind in a whirl of conflicting emotions. She was in a rage with Nordyke for suspecting her secret; she was still more angered at the scaler that she had not been in position to refute the statement. Unwittingly Mann had, according to settlement code, committed himself either to marry India or be refused. He had singled her out for attention, had "kept company" with her. The girl was mystified at his strange silence. She resolved to end their association. While she appreciated his true-hearted manhood and his kindness, she could not be made a target for settlement gossip.

In the boarding-house at Agache Nordyke was likewise in a black temper.

"She'll send for me, all right," he mused. "When the Blair mill is wiped from earth and the mortgage foreclosed, we'll get a summons to attend the obsequies. There'll be a different tune, my high-strung friend, and I think we'll be in harmony."

The continuation of this highly interesting story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. Read it. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year.

* * *

Knew Its Nature.

Judge Clayton of Alabama tells of a case in a court of that State in which the first witness called was an aged colored man.

Before he was sworn the presiding magistrate directed that the usual question be put to the fellow. "Do you know the nature of an oath?"

The old colored man shifted himself from one foot to the other before replying. A sly grin crept into his face. "Well, jedge," said he, "I can't say how 'tis wid mos' folks; but, yo' honoh, I reckon it's sorter secon' nature wid me."

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COPIES WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS

The forger appreciates a good name.

Every man must catch cold for himself.

A damaged reputation is hard to repair.

The best way to get a living is to earn it.

A giggling girl usually becomes a cackling woman.

All the disagreeable people don't live on cross streets.

A steady income is often responsible for an unsteady gait.

Be sure of your facts before attempting to pose as a liar.

A lot of people are disappointed in love—after marriage.

There's room at the top for more men than can stick there.

And some men try to make a cornet noise on a tin fife salary.

Some men are as proud of their ancestors as a self-made man is of himself.

The easiest road to wealth is to have a rich relative leave you a fortune.

Some men take to drink naturally, and some others are quite willing to be taken.

The frenzied financier has a warm welcome for the chap who has money to burn.

The less a woman's hat costs, the more becoming it is in the eyes of her husband.

Many a man is seemingly wise because he has no children to ask him questions.

The man who says that he never had an opportunity probably wouldn't recognize one if he saw it.

Lots of men go where duty calls, and stand around with their hands in their pockets after they get there.

Occasionally a man has the last word in an argument with his wife, but he has to say it under his breath.

In this great and glorious land of the free one has to pay for the drinks in order to get a whack at the free lunch.

There is no harm in a man's being in advance of his age, providing he has money enough to pay for his feed until his age catches up with him.

But if a man turned over a new leaf every time his wife wanted him to he would have but little time left in which to earn the price of her bonnets.

Home and Health

FASHION NOTES.

Hats have a decidedly mannish fashion.

Beaver fur has grown into great popularity.

Jumper dresses are being received with a good deal of favor.

The quiet colors are as much liked in plaids as the gay ones.

Sleeves of coats and bodices are long and slashed, puffed and otherwise made very decorative.

Women's heavy wool sweaters are a trifle shorter than last year and usually belted across the back.

Some of the new collars are high enough to make one anxious lest our frocks should rise above our heads.

When in doubt as to how to trim a frock, either braid or embroider it. You can't possibly go astray then and you will be certain to have a charming dress after it is finished.

◆

NEEDLEWORK.

Every mother likes to see her small daughter look dainty at all times. But girls, as well as boys, get their clothes soiled at play, and while boys can be put into overalls or rompers, according to their age, few mothers will like to see their little girls dressed in these homely garments. But there will be no objection to miniature bungalow aprons on the order of those worn by the mothers, especially if a pretty color is chosen.

To make the apron measure off twice the length from the shoulder of the wearer to the edge of her dress, allowing for a deep hem, fold this and cut the top in kimono fashion, taking out under the arms to below the waist line, then cut straight across to the selvage edges. This fullness is plaited or gathered and set on after cutting slits in the body of the apron to fit. A strip of the material holds the fullness down. If preferred, the skirt part may be gored all the way down, but the child does not get the freedom the fullness allows.

These aprons are quite easy to make at home. The best kind of materials to use are the soft cotton poplins, ratine cotton and silk mixtures in the cheaper grades, and the crepe goods. In fact, any fabric that does not demand too much in the way of laundering will answer, provided, of course, it is fairly substantial.

The neck is cut square and edged with a white band, as are the kimono sleeves.

The closing is in the back from neck to waist line, or for convenience in laundering it may button all the way down. Anyway it is an even thing. The time spent in making the extra closing will be saved when it comes to ironing. For the fabrics mentioned very little ironing is necessary.

The bloomers are no more difficult to make than the aprons.

◆

RECIPES.

FRENCH MUTTON STEW—Take 1½ pounds of neck or shoulder of mutton, cut in pieces, five cents' worth of carrots and turnips, 2 onions, and a sprig of parsley. Brown a tablespoon of flour with about the same quantity of butter. When brown add meat, then the vegetables cut in rounds—put one clove in one of the onions—add pepper, salt and 2 cups of cold water. Cover tight and simmer two hours. One hour before serving add a few potatoes to the stew.

PANNED BAKED SWEET POTATOES—Boil sweet potatoes until done drain, peel and slice. Butter a baking dish, put in layer of the sliced potatoes sprinkle rather thickly with light-brown sugar and dot with bits of butter. Add another layer of potatoes with sugar and butter, and so on. When dish is full, put in oven and bake, covered for half an hour and uncovered for half an hour.

APPLE PIE—Line a deep dish with plain paste, fill with sliced apples, dust with grated nutmeg, add a dash of salt and a little powdered cinnamon, cover with a top crust made richer by the addition of more butter. Bake in a moderate oven. Make a sirup of 1 cup of sugar and 2 tablespoons of water and pour it into the pie thru the slits in the upper crust as soon as it is taken from the oven.

APPLE SNOW—Peel and grate 1 large sour apple and sprinkle over it a small cup of powdered sugar; break into this the whites of 2 eggs and beat all constantly for half an hour. Heap this in a glass dish and pour a fine smooth custard around it, and serve.

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FOR THE HOUSEWIFE.

When making biscuits try rolling them thinner and using two cuts for one biscuit, laying one on top of the other. Made in this way, they will break evenly and are much daintier.

A great many persons find it difficult to wrap up a cake that has a soft frosting without have the frosting stick to the paper. If you stick a few toothpicks into the cake and then wrap it up you will find that the toothpicks will hold up the paper very nicely.

A clever housewife says that when she has a couple of hours' ironing to do, or if she has meat or vegetables to cook which require two or more hours' time, she puts a teakettle full of water on the unlighted gas burner next to the one she is using, so that when her ironing or cooking is done she has a teakettle full of almost boiling water without burning any gas for that purpose.

Serve potatoes plain boiled only when they are new. With roast meat serve potatoes mashed or roasted in the pan with the meat. With fricasseed meats serve baked potatoes with a crisp fried vegetable like eggplant. With roast pork serve baked potatoes, a green vegetable, and a sour apple sauce. With roast chicken serve mashed potatoes, onions, and sour jelly.

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GOOD HOUSEKEEPING.

It has been said that there must be something essentially vulgar in any woman, whatever her opportunities of culture may have been, who despises the homely tasks of housekeeping and home-making—tasks which the wisest and the most cultured women have delighted in. Whatever advantages the young housewife may have had in the way of education, whatever opportunities for culture and accomplishment, those only make for good in her position as professor of housewifery.

She must be able to cook and serve a wholesome dinner, and at the same time be competent to preside over the same with dignity and grace. She must be an adept at making, mending, and nursing; she must be a financier, a resourceful business manager, and a general all-around household chief.

Genius has been defined as the power of persistence; and when a housewife becomes disheartened over the small, daily trials of housekeeping, or perplexed and worried over problems that seem hard to solve, she must remember that perfection in any profession requires time, study, and practice; and a perfect system of housekeeping must be a gradual development. At first, there may be mistakes and discouragements, but with patience and persistence the plucky housewife will sooner or later find herself mistress of the situation; the household machinery, will begin to run smoothly; and tasks which at first seemed hard and perplexing will become simple and easy.

Thru practice the brain will become quick to conceive and comprehend; and the hands deft and clever to perform all the tasks that make for the upbuilding and maintaining of that most beautiful and enduring earthly structure, a true and harmonious home. Wherever you find such a home you will be sure to find a patient, painstaking, intelligent, and loving housewife as its maker.

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Or, Motor Boat Boys Afloat

By St. George Rathborne

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CHAPTER XII.

YOU'RE right; it was a whistle," replied the leader, joyously; "and it may have come from a railroad engine, or some mill along the Garraway River. We don't care, so long as it tells us we're closer to civilization than we've been this long while!"

"Hurrah!" whooped impulsive Red, dancing a hornpipe to give vent to his feelings. The others joined in; and from their excitement any one would be apt to think these boys, instead of having been lost in the swamp for a few days, had been marooned on an island in the coral seas for months and months, and finally sighted a friendly sail putting in to take them off.

They all felt so very sure that the morrow was destined to see an end of their wanderings amidst these strange surroundings that they spent a merry evening. The supper tasted unusually fine, too, and Dumpling, anticipating a speedy opportunity to lay in a new stock of provisions if they needed them, was very prodigal in cooking an extra supply.

Still, it might be noticed that not a scrap remained when the four cruisers had finished eating; for boys' appetites are alarmingly elastic on occasion; and Dumpling just "hated to see anything wasted"; so he often, as he explained, just ate this or that to save them; and Red was in the habit of laughing as he obesrved that a poor excuse was better than none.

"If [illegible]e our way out tomorrow [illegible] have lots of time to do all we want, won't we, Perk?" Bob asked, later on, as they sat around, after their habit, making themselves as comfortable as possible, while they watched the flames leap up, and pattern all sorts of queer figures.

"Well, I was smart enough to take Billie at his word," replied the other; "and in the written agreement, of which each of us kept a copy, it reads 'fifteen days from the time we started.' Of course, I expected we'd make the run in five at the most; but my head was long enough to take in chances of our getting lost in this swamp, the same as they did."

"Depend on you, Perk, to look ahead, every time," commented Red.

"And fellows," Perk went on, soberly, "don't forget that if we want to win out, we've not only got to run up to Meteor Island, and get that camp ax, but return the same way!"

"Gee whiz! That means another trip thru here, doesn't it?" sighed Dumpling.

Bob, too, acted as tho the idea did not afford him much pleasure; but reckless Red scoffed at such a thing as being afraid of attempting it.

"What of that?" he exclaimed, contemptuously. "Ain't we had our lesson, good and hard, and learned how to keep away from false openings? Perk here knows a heap more'n he did when he started into Dismal Swamp. Chances are ten to one he'll take us straight thru, and we'll never spend more'n a single night here; won't you, Perk?"

"Honest Injun, fellows, I don't want to brag, after the mess I've made of things so far," the leader went on to say; "but I really do think we can hit a hot pace going back, and never get lost once. You know they say the 'longest way around is the shortest to the fire,' and I've taken that to heart. You leave it to me, and I think I'll manage the business all right."

Several times that evening the boys, who seemed to have their ears open for any sign of hopeful things, heard sounds that really told them that they could not be so very far away from their own kind. Once it was the distant bark of a farmer's faithful watchdog; and again a rooster's clear crow floated to them. And never had these sounds seemed one-half so pleasant as now.

"Why," said Dumpling, with his accustomed whimsical humor, "I really and truly believe I'd be willing to lie awake half the night, and snicker every time I heard a dog crow or a rooster bark. Many's the time I've got mad at our Towser for baying at the moon; but never again for me. There can be worse, much worse things happen than to have a dog barkin' nights," and he shuddered as he sent a swift glance around at the dismal swamp, doubtless having in mind the time when he found himself slowly but surely being sucked down in that slimy mud.

None of them slept very soundly on that night. In fact, the excitement attending their strong hope that the end of their wanderings was close at hand seemed to keep them restless, even more than had been the case on other nights, when the prospect had been most discouraging.

But the night came to an end at last; and when Dumpling crawled ashore, after waking up from his last nap, and discovering that he was alone aboard the Skoot, he found that some of the others had already started to get the morning meal without waiting for him to do his usual work, so anxious were they to be on the move, and test out the clew of that sluggish current.

At the same time Perk insisted on their having a decent breakfast. It was one of his habits, when off on a cruise like this; because, as he said, there might be no telling when they would have a chance for another meal. And he always found a warm advocate of the same rule in Dumpling, who would not have grumbled had the order been for five meals a day instead of three.

The sun was up when they started, else they might have found more or less difficulty in making their way along, for it was never very bright in the dense swamp, even at midday.

"We want to make sure of our course, and not get adrift again," Perk warned the others, when Red complained of "just creeping along."

"That's so," assented Dumpling; and as Bob also seemed to agree, Red owned up to being in the wrong.

"Fix it just like you want, Perk," he said frankly; "I ain't a-goin' to have anything more to say about it, because I know you're right."

Whenever they were not quite sure of their course, on account of some division in the channel, Perk again resorted to the pilot scraps of paper, or chips, and in this way settled the question in a satisfactory way. An hour, two of them passed, and so far they had not seen any particular change in their dismal surroundings.

"But the current is gettin' stronger and stronger all the while, don't you make a mistake!" Bob announced, as tho his faith might be founded on a rock, and could not be moved.

"No question about that," Perk declared, with a smile that told of complete confidence, and which did more to reassure Dumpling than any amount of words might have done. "Any minute now I'm expecting to turn a bend in the channel, and get a glimpse of open water."

"So say we all of us!" cried Bob.

Somehow what Perk had just remarked seemed to stir every fellow to the core; for as they moved along at the slowest possible speed, to still keep the engines working, four pairs of eyes kept almost constant vigil on what lay ahead of them; and after several false alarms it was Red, after all, who made the important discovery, proving that he had the sharpest vision.

"What's that I see thru that screen of bushes over yonder, Perk?" he demanded, sweeping his hand around to the right.

"Oh! looks to me like a boat of some kind!" declared Dumpling, with suddenly awakened interest, as he clutched the side of the Skoot, and stared as hard as he possibly could.

"It is a boat, with two boys in the same!" replied Perk, a minute later.

"Whatever can they be doing there?" Bob asked.

"Looks to me like they had fishing poles in their hands; and chances are they're trying to get a mess of perch where the swamp water starts in to join the brackish Garraway above tidewater," Perk announced.

"Then that means we've got to the dear old Garraway at last, doesn't it, Perk?" Dumpling wanted to know, in feverish impatience.

"No question about that, boys," the leader announced; "finding these fellows here fishing settles it. And if you look sharp you can see the river away over yonder. Yes, we're out of Dismal Swamp all right, and everybody's glad!"

Those two ambitious boys, sitting in their rowboat, and engaged in pulling in fresh-water perch, must have been rather startled to hear suddenly a tremendous salvo of wild cheers break from aboard the motor boats that they had noticed coming thru the channels which led from the recesses of Dismal Swamp. They learned the cause a short time later, when Perk stopped close by to ask a few questions concerning the Garraway, and explained how they had been three days lost in the swamp trying to break thru. Just as Perk had figured out, the river was close by, and soon they would be nosing up it, headed for the island that was the goal of their strange cruise.

"No need of our hurrying any, boys," said Perk, after they had started on again. "So long as we get to Meteor Island before dark, it'll be all right. You see, we'll have to put in a night up there somewhere, and might as well stick it out on the island. Then we'll have plenty of time to dig out that scrap iron tomorrow, and load it on the Old Reliable; starting down current in time to bring up here before sunset. Another night here, and—well, we'll tackle the swamp again; and this time hope to get thru by daylight, too."

"Hurrah! that's talking some, let me

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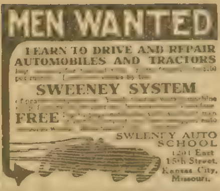
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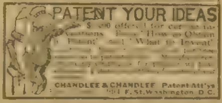
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tell you!" cried Red, whose enthusiasm was very easily started going; for he always had it "on tap," Dumpling declared.

"Yes, we want to get that meteor, if it can be done," remarked wise Dumpling, who had a lawyer for a father, and hence always looked out for covering expenses, when he could do so. "My dad's set his heart on ownin' one; and just think of havin' our whole trip for nothin'. Dad, he pays the freight, if we're successful."

"Oh, don't you fret," Bob assured him; "we'll crib that same meteor by hook or crook. If you were aboard the Old Reliable right now you'd possibly wonder why our skipper fetched that block and tackle along, such as he uses to haul his boat up on the ways at home, when he wants to copper paint her garboard streaks, to keep the worms from boring into the oak keel alongside. Well, unless I miss my guess that's to help get the heavy mass of fused metal on board, in case it's too much for us any other way."

"Didn't I say Perk had the long head always?" cried Red, admiringly.

"Hold on," laughed the object of all this adulation, "how do we know but what in spite of a dozen blocks and tackles that meteor may not be too heavy for us? They sometimes weigh tons, so I'm told. We're going to do all we can to carry it off; but my boat wasn't built for a brick barge, you know, like that one coming down the Garraway, with a tug, right now."

They watched the convoy passing with more or less pleasure. After all those lonesome days spent in the gloomy swamp it was a positive delight to see signs of civilization, even tho it might be only a puffing tug, and a barge laden with fired bricks.

As they continued up the Garraway they came to villages and even towns on its banks, where there were plenty of signs of bustle. All of the boys were feeling very light-hearted just then, because of their escape; and when a savage cur came down to the edge of the water to bark furiously at them, Dumpling spoke very gently, as tho he could never again harbor resentment against any animal that had connection with his fellow human beings.

"There, there, that'll do, little doggie!" he called out soothingly. "Don't get excited, because we ain't a-goin' to hurt you, not a bit of it. Oh! bark away, if it does you any good, because it doesn't bother us. Swim out here, and I'll give you an old biscuit that's got too hard for us to eat."

Needless to say, the ugly dog had no idea of complying with this coaxing on the part of Dumpling; tho had he done so, the fat boy stood ready to pat him on the head, and feed him the best they had.

"I was thinking that perhaps we'd better haul up at that town we're coming to," Perk said, about the middle of the morning; "because we need some supplies, and as good a chance to get the same mightn't come again."

"That's so!" burst out Dumpling, with a happy look on his face; "some of our grub is gettin' low down; and since it ain't goin' to cost the club a single cent, why, we might as well have the best there is. And if you let me do the marketin', Perk, tell you what, I'd like to bring back half a smoked ham, as well as a few other things I've got on my list."

The others burst out into a roar of laughter on hearing this.

"Trust Dumpling for always having a list along, when it comes to eating," Red declared.

"Well, doesn't somebody have to think of all these things?" demanded the other, as he turned on his tormentor, tho with good-nature beaming all over his rosy face. "What'd happen if everybody left it to the next feller? Huh! guess you got your appetite along with you, Red, same as the rest of us. Don't you go to poking fun at me because I'm a public benefactor, that's what I am. If you won't do your own thinkin', somebody's just got to do it for you every time."

"Hurrah for Dumpling!" exclaimed Bob.

"That's all right," said Perk, "and if you want to go to the expense of getting half a smoked ham, why I'm not meaning to stop you; but when I said supplies I was thinking more about gasoline and fresh water."

"Oh! somebody else c'n look after them," observed Dumpling, composedly, as if he could not afford to bother with such commonplace matters, when other things of greater importance needed attention.

After having reached this decision they did pull in when they arrived opposite the river town. Bob was left in charge of the two motor boats, while his companions started to secure the various things that had been mentioned as "necessities."

First of all, they emptied their extra gasoline into the reservoirs of the boats, and Perk went off with both five-gallon cans. He felt sure that the garage where he expected to buy what was needed would send the filled cans down to the river's edge in a car of some kind.

Red, on his part, had his eye on a [illegible] in a yard on a high patch of ground, and he hoped the water would be sweet and cold, for he meant to fill both cans before stopping.

As for Dumpling, he did not carry anything away with him, it is true; but when later on he arrived, seated alongside the driver of a grocer's wagon, Bob's eyes fairly bulged out at sight of the immense quantities of eatables that were piled up on the bank, waiting to be taken aboard.

"Say, d'ye think we're a-going to make a month or two of this cruise, Dumpling?" demanded Bob, after the man had driven away, having evidently been paid.

"You never can tell," replied the fat boy, composedly; "besides, don't forget [illegible]'ve got to go thru that Dismal Swamp a[illegible] and p'raps now this time we might get stuck for keeps, and put in weeks a-wanderin' around. And then again, as a clincher, please remember [illegible] my dad, he pays the freight; and [illegible] of the things I've got are done up [illegible] packages, so they'll keep a long while."

"Well, you are a great schemer, I must say, Dumpling," laughed Bob; "and I guess your dad'll be wise if he makes a lawyer out of you, too. Lookin' forward to other little side trips, ain't you, and makin' hay while the sun shines?"

When everything was put aboard, the two motor boats again breasted the sluggish current of the Garraway, and mile after mile was gradually placed behind them. As Perk had said, they were in no hurry, and during the morning he was able to hold the impulsive Red in check.

It was different in the afternoon, for soon the Skoot "scooted" ahead, with Red waving his hand, as tho bidding them farewell, and letting them know they would find him waiting when they reached Meteor Island later on that afternoon.

As it turned out, Red counted without his host, just as often happened with him. One hour afterward Bob sang out that he had sighted the swift-flying Skoot, and that she appeared to be tied up to the shore.

"Bet you a cooky Red's gone and had another of his silly accidents; and even now he's tryin' to mend his motor!" he went on to say.

"It wouldn't surprise me a bit!" remarked Perk, who had seen this same thing occur so many times that he was quite used to it.

Sure enough, as they drew near, Dumpling's head appeared over the side of the tied-up boat, and his loud voice announced:

"Gee whiz! but mebbe we didn't have a fine old time, tho? She went and got away from Red again, sure she did, and you just ought to have seen us cavorting around like a crazy thing. Stuck her nose in the mud at last, and near sent me a-flyin'. But the engine's been in the sulks ever since; and Red, he's been a-tinkerin' and a-tinkerin' till he's nigh took her all to pieces; but he ain't found out the trouble yet."

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"But I will in double-quick order!" called out the confident skipper.

Perk knew the signs, and so he made fast to the bank.

"No telling how long we'll be here," he said to Bob.

An hour passed, and there was no sign of a move. Perk even offered to tow the disabled Skoot, but this the proud skipper disdainfully declined to permit.

"Go along if you want to, fellows, and leave us here," he remarked; "tho if you only gave me a little more time I'm dead sure I c'n fix her up."

The time drifted along until the shades of evening drew near; and it became a settled thing that they would pass the night where they were.

"Got it at last!" announced Red, triumphantly.

But it was already so late that Perk declared there was no use starting until morning came along.

"I only hope that we won't be bothered tonight," he remarked, as they got ready to go ashore for supper. "I didn't much like the way those two men came around and watched us, talking together, and pointing as they did."

Dumpling looked somewhat worried at hearing Perk speak like this; but the evening passed without any signs of trouble; and finally they went aboard, to make themselves as comfortable as usual, Red telling his stout chum that he must learn to keep over on his half of the bed, and not try to smother him.

Dumpling did not happen to notice that his skipper took his gun to bed with him, so to speak, arranging it conveniently near, so that in case of a sudden necessity arising he would not have to grope far for a weapon; had the fat boy known of this he might not have been able to go to sleep as easily as he did.

The awakening was a rough one, for there was a terribly loud bang close to the ear of Dumpling, and he immediately heard Red shouting at the top of his voice: "How d'ye like that, Mister Thief? Try to sneak aboard and rob us, would you? I've got another barrel loaded with Number Tens, and you're welcome to the same if so be you think I'm stingy. That's right, sing out! Bet you it stings some, and you'll be more careful next time you think to take what don't belong to you!"

By this time all of the boys were wide-awake. Perk appeared in his pajamas, with a navy blue toque on his head such as skaters love to wear. And from the way he handled that gun of his it would seem that he was ready to back the skipper of the Skoot up in his ambition to pepper the thieves good and hard; but only growls and hard words, that gradually died away in the distance, told the story.

CHAPTER XIII.

OH! MY stars! what a time we're having!" Dumpling was heard to exclaim. Then he quickly added: "Say, did you really pepper them, Red, or was I a-dreamin' it?"

At that Red laughed hoarsely.

"Wake up, Dumpling!" he chuckled; "sure you heard what they kept saying while they scrambled away. They saw me poke my head over the gunnel, and turned to run, knowing that the game was up, because I was flourishing my trusty gun. I just waited till they got so far, before I let fly, because I only wanted to tickle them; and you know at close quarters a charge of shot is worse than a bullet."

"That does you lots of credit, Red; it shows you've got a heart!" Dumpling declared, for he was inclined toward considerable tender feeling himself.

"But however did you happen to know they were coming?" demanded Bob Ketcham, who seemed to think that was the most wonderful part of the whole affair.

"Oh! a little cherub up aloft, [illegible] sailorman say watches over poor Jack, must have told me," Red declared. "But joking aside, boys, I happened to wake up, because I dreamed I was smothering to death; to find that Dumpling, in spite of my asking him to be decent, and let me have my side of the bed, was spreading himself all around, and making me gasp for breath. Well, I just shoved him over and then all at once I heard something give a grunt outside on shore."

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"Whee! talk about excitement!" ejaculated Dumpling. "If we ain't gettin' more'n our share of the same these days and nights! But please go on, Red."

"When I heard that sound my first thought was along the line of a black bear, like the critter Bob here tried to ride while we were in the swamp," Red continued, "and having placed my gun just where I could lay my hands on it if I had to do such a thing in a big hurry, I just swung the same around, and sat up, meanin' to say: 'Who's there'?"

"And then you saw the fellows, is that it?" asked Bob, who was eagerly following every word of the interesting story.

"Why, you see, the fire hadn't quite gone out, and just then as luck would have it a little flame jumped up, making the shore plain before me. And I could see a couple of men crouching there, looking right at me. Course they saw they was discovered, and also that I was aiming my gun their way; because they turned right around and beat it like everything. And as I was telling you, I didn't press the trigger till they'd got just so far away; when I couldn't hold her in a mite longer, but blazed away. That's all!"

"It's sure enough," Bob went on to say.

"P'raps that red lantern helped show you to them!" Dumpling remarked, and by this he referred to the "riding light" which each boat had mounted when night set in; for they were on a navigable river, and there is a law that no craft shall tie up or anchor in such, without being careful to arrange a red or white light in a position where it can be easily seen.

Cargoes of bricks were being floated down to tidewater from yards farther up the Garraway, and Perk had been wise enough to tie up just below a bend, as well as selecting the side where the point jutted out, knowing that the channel lay on the opposite quarter, where the current cut out the soil, and made deep water.

"Do you think they were the same men who stood and watched us late in the afternoon, and then went away?" Perk wanted to know.

"Why, you see, I couldn't hold up my hand and say they were," Red replied; "'cause I never was introduced to the gentlemen; but chances are they must 'a' been the same parties. I know there were just two, one tall, and the other kind of squatty; and Perk, that covered the fellows we saw watching us."

"That settles it, then," Perk decided; "but you must have settled them, too, Red; and I don't think we'll be bothered any more tonight."

"I hope not," Dumpling sighed. "It upsets a feller terribly to be waked up all of a sudden by hearing a cannon go off; and then listen to a lot of wailing and groaning and threatening. I hardly feel like going to sleep again, to tell you the honest truth."

"Well, you'd better, and leave the job of standin' guard to Perk'n me," said the skipper of the Skoot, positively. "I'm going to get some more clothes on, and then keep that fire burnin' the rest of the night. If Perk wants to spell me later on, I'll agree."

"What time is it now?" asked Perk, casting a swift glance up toward the stars; "must be somewhere around two o'clock, I should think."

Upon consulting the only watch in the party, it was discovered to be just a quarter after two; which information pleased Perk very much, because he rather prided himself on being able to tell from the position of the westering stars about the time of night, a little accomplishment that any wide-awake boy can pick up without much trouble, if he tries.

So it was arranged that Red should stand guard until a certain planet [illegible]ched the western horizon, and prepared to drop out of sight. Then he would softly call to Perk and arouse him. Bob suggested that they tie a string to Perk's wrist, and when the sentry wished to make a change all he would have to do would be to pull this.

"Oh! that's too much bother," Red told him; "and all you mention it for, Bob, is so you won't be waked up when I call him. But you and Dumpling here ought to be willing to stand for such a little thing as that. You get off easy, both of you. And Dumpling, please lie on your left side, so you won't snore, or push over on me. You've got some bad habits, let me tell you."

"Well," said Dumpling, quickly, "it ain't considered polite to look a gift horse in the mouth, don't you know, Red."

"You'll have to explain what you mean, because I don't seem to catch on," the other told him, as he pulled his trousers on, and then followed with a sweater.

"Wake up, then, and you'll see how I'm partly responsible for saving the outfit from being robbed!" Dumpling told him.

"Well, did you ever hear such nerve!" exclaimed Red; "please tell us how you manage to figure that out, Dumpling!"

"Huh! Didn't you just say that I rolled over on you, and made you dream that you was gettin' smothered, and that you just had to wake up? Well, s'pose now, I'd kept on my side, you wouldn't have woke up; and first thing you know we'd 'a' been minus both guns, and what's worse, a lot of our precious grub."

Perk and Bob gave a loud laugh at the ingenuity of the fat chum; while Red was heard to snort with disdain, and mutter:

"Anybody could tell his father was a lawyer."

But Dumpling, once he lay down and went to sleep, knew nothing more until the sun shining on his face awakened him. Evidently Red and Perk must have kept faithful vigil; for the boats were still tied up to the bank, and so far as Dumpling was able to judge from a quick glance around, everything seemed to be in evidence.

The other boys were ashore, and getting ready to have breakfast; so Dumpling hastened to join them. After that duty had been properly attended to, and everybody admitted that he could not eat another mouthful, preparations for making a start were next in order.

"See here, Red," Perk went on to say, seriously, when both boats were about to open up as soon as the cables had been taken aboard, "you've gone and had two accidents since we started on this trip, and that ought to be enough. The third one might be a bad thing. All right, then; the rest of us want you to hold up your right hand and solemnly promise that from now on you'll leave good enough alone, and let your motor work without any meddling. You know what I mean; and we're all agreed on that, ain't we, boys?"

"You just better believe we are!" Dumpling called out, his round red face aglow with delight.

"Count me on the side of the majority," said Bob; "because I really and truly do believe your engine wouldn't seem so contrary, Red, if only you acted halfway decent with it. You've just got to promise, that's all there is to it."

The skipper of the Skoot shrugged his shoulders, as he went on to say:

"Three against one settles it, of course, fellows; and I'll agree to keep my hands off for the rest of this cruise; but sometime I'm going to get the best of that old motor, or know the reason why."

"Thank goodness! Now I'll breathe freely again!" Dumpling declared.

"You won't find that so easy, Dumpling," Red told him, in some scorn, "after the way you stuffed yourself with breakfast. Why, you're wheezing right now, because you didn't leave room to breathe decent."

The start was made, and mile after mile they ascended the stream, until Perk announced that they must be in the vicinity of Meteor Island; so that everybody began to show more or less excitement, each boy wanting to be the one to discover the goal ahead.

"There she is, I do believe, fellows!" Perk suddenly announced, pointing in a direction none of the others had appar-

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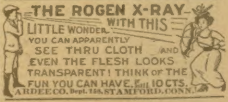
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and learn how these ailments can be easily and surely **relieved** at home without the dangers and expense of an operation. **When you are cured,** and able to enjoy life again, you can pass the good word along to some other sufferer. My home treatment is for **young or old. To Mothers of Daughters,** I will explain how to overcome green sickness (chlorosis), irregularities, headaches, and lassitude in young women and restore them to plumpness and health. Tell me if you are worried about your daughter. **Remember it costs you nothing** to give my home treatment a ten days' trial, and does not interfere with daily work. **If health is worth asking for,** then accept my generous offer and **write for the free treatment,** including my illustrated booklet, **"Women's Own Medical Adviser."** I will send all in plain wrappers postpaid. To save time, you can cut out this offer, mark your feelings, and return to me. **Send today,** as you may not see this offer again. Address,
MRS. M. SUMMERS, 457 E. WASHINGTON AVE., SOUTH BEND, IND.

ently even thought of looking; because they had failed to notice that the river made a queer bend beyond, and turned sharply to the right, while what they thought was the channel must be only a "pocket."

"Guess you've gone and got the bulge on the rest of us, Perk," admitted Red, as he scrutinized the spot in question; "that does look a whole lot like an island, and a tough enough place, too, with all them rocks and trees a-coverin' the same."

"Well, mebbe I ain't glad the first half of our journey's about done," Dumpling remarked, keeping his eyes fastened on the goal they were slowly heading for.

"Seems to me there's a boat over there, close to the island!" Bob suggested.

"It is a boat, and the people in the same seem to be fishing, just like the two we struck when we came out of the swamp," Dumpling went on to say. "Looks like the Garraway might be a pretty decent fishing place, because we've struck a dozen boats with men or boys in the same, tryin' after fish that come up from the bay; or else down from fresh water above."

"That looks bad to me," Perk remarked.

"What, just because there's a man and a boy a-fishin' near the old island? Why, Perk, we don't need to bother with them any," Bob went on to say.

"Of course not," replied the other; "but don't you see, chances are they've been and gone ashore here."

"Oh! Now I get on to what you mean—you think they might have discovered Billie's camp ax stickin' in that tree, and took the same; and that we won't have it to show when we get back. Is that it, Perk?" Red called out.

"Yes, that's what I was thinking about," the other admitted; "tho, after all, it needn't matter much, if only the pictures I mean to take of us on Meteor Island turn out all right, and we manage to get that hunk of metal aboard for Dumpling's father. Seems to me that ought to be all the evidence we'd need; but when we get up close, leave it to me to find out about the island, boys, and don't butt in."

(Concluded next week.)

* * *

Mazeppa of the Sea.

(Continued From Page 11.)

He was slowly pacing in the lee waist when the increasing outward light gave forth a clear, ringing hail.

"Help, help! I am abandoned and alone, and chained fast to the mast——"

Eveleth leaped like a startled deer. He flashed a look at the lifting fog, saw nothing, and then wheeled upon his men. Orders flung from his lips, orders to call the captain and to bring the ship to. It needed no abstruse studying to tell what was just beyond his sight.

This remarkable story will be concluded in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00 and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

Their Lost Prince.

(Continued From Page 7.)

The being of Prince Robin of Regalshofen—who henceforth is plain Robin Orr—tingled with the exhilarating thrill of a wanderer returned after long peregrinations when he stepped foot on the dock in lower New York. Robert Orr was as glad to return to his adopted land as any native American. His heart expanded as he felt he was again in a white man's civilization. Even the shout of the ragged newsboy on the docks was music to his ears. Orr had not seen an American newspaper in six months. He was hungry for news of the outside world. But what was the newsy shouting?

"Wuxtry! All about the moider of the Prince of Oligarchy! King Leopold dying!"

The paper vender's cry stunned Orr for a moment. He snatched a sheet from the boy's hand and drank in the glaring headlines.

This capital story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

Marriage Made Easy.

On the frontier, courtship and marriage are not the matters of convention or even of sentiment that they are in long-established communities. For example:

My grandfather came to this country in 1831, writes one man, by sailing vessel to New Orleans. Thence he went up the Mississippi River to St. Louis, and there he bought a horse, saddle, and other "fixin's."

He settled on the north bank of the Missouri River about sixty miles from St. Louis. He and a cousin of his built a log cabin and began to clear the land. They took turns doing the outside work and the cooking.

One day, during the cousin's turn at cooking, he upset the pot into the fire, and when my grandfather came in, the discouraged cook said to him: "See here, Julius, this sort of thing won't do any more; we must have a housekeeper. One of us must get married."

"Well, why don't you marry, then?" said grandfather.

"No, you are the older; you must marry first."

"That's easy said. You know that the only family where there are girls old enough to marry lives forty miles from here, and I don't know whether any of them will have me. We are strangers and from a foreign country, you know."

"Well, you can try, can't you?"

So the following Sunday grandfather rode forty miles over to Squire McClenney's. The squire greeted him cordially, for callers were always welcome in those days.

After talking about the weather, the crops, the hunting, and so forth, grandfather, with some embarrassment, introduced the subject of a housekeeper, and asked the squire if he had any objections to his marrying one of his daughters.

"None at all," said the squire. "Have you asked the girl yet?"

"Oh, no, I only wanted your permission to court her. That is what we have to do in the old country. And, besides, I can't wait two or three years before I marry, as they do over there."

"Oh," said the squire, "if the gal's willin' I'll marry you right now." And, calling to his wife, he said: "Mary, tell Elinor to come in!"

Elinor was the eldest of his twelve children, and altho not yet 16, was tall, well-grown and fully developed.

When she entered he said: "Elinor, here's a man who wants to marry you. Are you willin'?"

"Oh, pa, that's rather sudden."

"Well, well, you can talk to ma about it, and sleep over it. Let me know in the mornin'."

The next morning she said "Yes," and the wedding was set for two weeks later.

Every one within a radius of forty miles and more was there.

The day after the wedding grandfather rode up to the horse block, his young wife got up behind him, and thus they went home.

* * *

Savage Hunger.

Mary and Tommy had been to hear a missionary talk at Sunday-school.

"Did he tell you about the poor heathen?" father inquired at the dinner table.

"Yes, sir," answered Mary. "He said that they were often hungry, and when they beat on the tum-tums it could be heard for miles."

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Send Us $1.00 and get this Men's New Plaid Wool Mackinaw

A very special bargain. Order now, direct from this ad. Mail the coupon below.

On Credit Made from durable 30 ounce wool Mackinaw cloth, selected quality. Very stylish. Very warm. Cut on double-breasted model with large shawl collar, 34 inches long. Has 2 large outside patch pockets with flaps. Also has belt extending all around. Furnished in handsome plaid effects in maroon or Oxford gray. Sizes 32 to 44. **Order by No. B-1.** Mail the coupon today.

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This watch guaranteed 1 year. Guarantee in back of case.

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Outfit consists of 8 pieces:

West Point Norfolk Suit Coat has 3 outside patch pockets with flaps and 1 inside breast pocket. Back has stylish plaits running from yoke to waistline. Knickerbockers are cut full; have belt loops and strap and buckle at knee. Furnished in handsome novelty cassimere in blue, brown or grey. Sizes 6 to 17.

Shoes are made of Best-Ever Calf. Strongly sewed to stand hard wear. Sizes up to 6.

Stylish Golf Cap is made from selected patterns. Sizes 6 1-4 to 7 1-8.

Waist is made from striped percale with military linked collar and outside pocket.

Silk-Knitted Reversible Tie Comes in beautiful color effects.

3 Pairs Athlete Stockings Made with triple knees, which means three times ordinary service.

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You may wonder how we can afford to do this. We can't. But here is the point. We want a certain number of new customers—quick. So we give this watch as so much advertising. We know that it will bring thousands of orders. All those who get this outfit will tell their friends about our bargains. But, remember, the offer is limited. Just mail us a dollar bill or postoffice order. Send your order at once.

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☐ Send the Boy's Outfit. Size Suit.......... Color Suit.......... Size Shoes.......... Size Cap..........

I enclose.......as first payment, to be returned if I do not keep the garments. Otherwise, I will pay your advertised monthly terms.

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(Put X in the ☐ opposite the article you want to order.)

Ledger's Embroidery Corner

We call the attention of every woman to the beauty of the patterns displayed from week to week, and wish to impress upon each one the splendid quality of material that makes our offer a great bargain in every case. Every offer is complete. You can finish it up without buying anything extra.

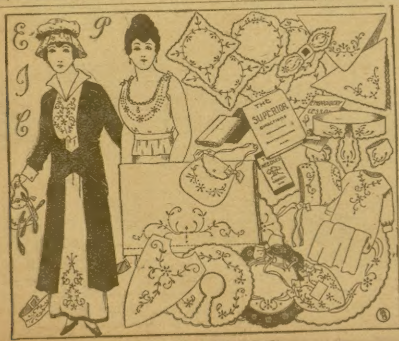
These designs are already stamped on the best quality cloth, and every set comes to you complete, exactly as described.

You are sure to find many articles that you want if you watch the Ledger each week, and it is so easy to get them. Any person can earn one or all of the designs shown by sending us the amount of subscriptions to either the Chicago Ledger or Saturday Blade, required in the description under each article.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

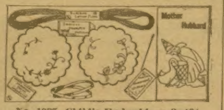
Either the Chicago Ledger or Saturday Blade $1.00 a year each; 6 months for 50 cents.

The Blade and Ledger together $1.50 a year (52 issues); 6 months for 75 cents; 4 months 50 cents.



No. 521, Fancy Work Outfit.

NO. 521, FANCY WORK OUTFIT.— Did you ever [illegible] bag? If you did you will remember that for one cent you received in a paper bag some popcorn and so many pieces of various kinds of candy that you wondered how in the world it could be sold so cheaply. This fancy work outfit will remind you of those days. It consist of 1 centerpiece and 6 doilies to match, stamped on fine white linene; 1 bone stiletto for punching holes [illegible] broidery needles; 3 skeins of embroidery cotton; 1 cake of Superior stamping preparation; 1 distributor; complete directions for transferring perforated patterns. The designs consist of corset covers, shirtwaist, collars and cuffs, baby cap, baby bib, calendars, complete alphabet and many others. Given for a year's subscription to the Blade or the Ledger for $1.00.



No. 1025, Child's Embroidery Outfit.

NO. 1025, CHILD'S EMBROIDERY OUTFIT.—With this complete and practical embroidery outfit for children the little ones will pass many pleasant hours learning to embroider "just like mamma does." It consists of: One pair of embroidery hoops, one embroidery needle, one skein of mercerized cotton, one stamped piece for outline embroidery, four stamped doilies, one sheet of comical transfer patterns, one instruction sheet, and an eight page embroidery booklet. All sent prepaid for a year's subscription, new or renewal, at $1.00, to the Blade or Ledger.

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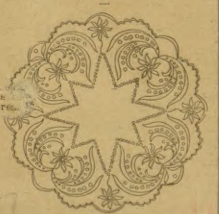

No. 1742, Centerpiece.

NO. 1742, CENTERPIECE.—Stamped on real white Irish linen, size 18x18 inches, including four skeins of cotton floss. Given for $1 in subscriptions.

Same design stamped on real white Irish linen, size 36x36 inches, including six skeins of cotton floss. Given with a year's subscription to the Blade and the Ledger for $1.50.

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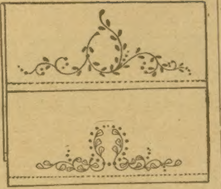

No. 34, Pillow Cases.

NO. 34, PILLOW CASES.—The pillow cases are already made up and hemstitched, from good quality white muslin; size 24x36. One pair, any one design, sent for a $2.00 subscription, new or renewal, to the Blade and the Ledger.

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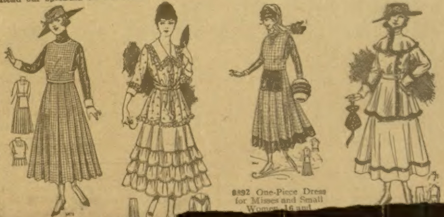
We have a splendid offer of the best and most fashionable patterns that can be produced by the greatest designers of New York and Paris, and what is more, these patterns will be within the reach of every one, and every one will have a wide selection to choose from. **Read our splendid offer below.**



8892 One-Piece Dress for Misses and Small Women, 16 and 18 years.

8892 One-Piece Dress for Misses and Small Women, 16 and [illegible]

Misses and Small Women, 16 and 18 years.

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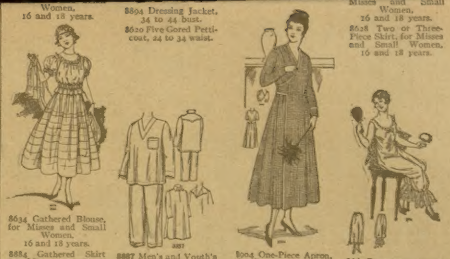

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Here is the way we will do it. To every one who will send us one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger we will send absolutely free five pattern coupons. Each coupon will be good for one pattern and you can select the patterns from those illustrated in any issue of the Chicago Ledger. When you see a pattern that you like all you have to do is to send us a coupon and it will be sent to you at once. In this way you will have hundreds of patterns from which to pick the five that you will be entitled to, and you have all the time you need to pick out the ones you want.

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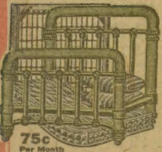

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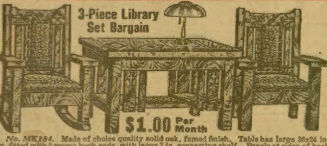

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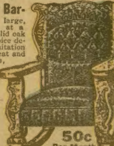

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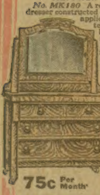

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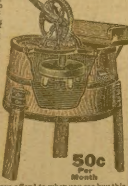

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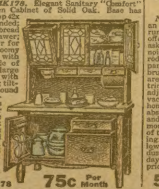

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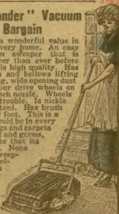
Hartman's "Wonder" Vacuum Sweeper Bargain

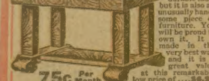
No. MK182. Here's a wonderful value in an article needed in every home. An easy running, silent vacuum sweeper that is offered at a price lower than ever before asked for an article of this high quality. Has noiseless, fibre bearings and bellows lifting rods, steel frame dust bag, wide opening dust pan, pressed steel top, four drive wheels on brush, 3 bellows and 12 inch nozzle. Wheels are flanged to avoid tire trouble. Is nickle trimmed. Fully guaranteed. Has brush adjustment—operated by foot. This is a vacuum sweeper that should be in every home. Will keep your rugs and carpets absolutely free from dust and germs, and is so easy to operate that its more like play than work. None of the dust of ordinary sweeping. You don't have to follow up your work with a dust rag. Order one today at this unheard of price of only **$3.97.**



50c Per Month

Hartman's Library Table Bargain

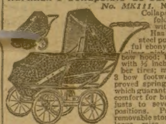
No. MK179. Magnificent Library Table constructed of selected hardwood to which is applied a finish in imitation of quarter-sawed oak that so closely resembles the real wood that it requires an experienced eye to detect the difference [illegible] fumed finish. Has square edge top, [illegible] drawer for papers or magazines; 2½ in. square corner posts fitted to heavy scroll feet, and strong lower shelf. Not only is this a strong, solidly built, durable table but it is also an unusually handsome piece of furniture. You will be proud to own it. It is made in the very best way and it is a great value at this remarkably low price of....**$6.95**



75c Per Month

Hartman's Collapsible Go-Cart Bargain

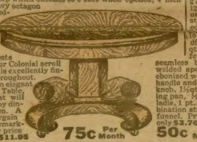
No. MK111. New all steel, Collapsible Go-Cart, folds completely with one motion. Has heavy tubular steel pushers; beautiful ebony handle with silver-nickel corners; 3 bow hood; 10 inch wheels with ½ inch cushion rubber tires; metal fenders; 3 bow footwell hood: improved spring construction which guarantees maximum comfort for baby; back adjusts to several different positions. Price includes removable storm front with large mica window that makes it easily convertible into a bad-weather cart. Easy riding, too, as the rubber tires take up the shock and jar when going over rough places. Give the baby real comfort by ordering at once one of these fine Go-Carts. Price **$6.98.** This is the greatest value ever offered by anyone.



75c Per Month

Solid Oak Dining Table Bargain

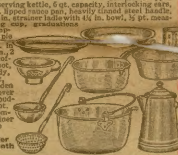
No. MK181. Beautiful solid oak dining table which can be ordered in Golden Oak or fumed finish. Has large 44 inch top which extends to 6 feet when opened; 4 inch rim; heavy octagon shape pedestal fitted to 24 inch platform which rests upon four Colonial scroll legs. It is excellently finished throughout. This is an elegant Dining Table, one that will grace any dining room. A real bargain at our remarkably low price of only **$11.95**



75c Per Month

10-Piece "Hartman Longware" Aluminum Kitchen Set

No. MK183. Comprises lipped preserving kettle, 6 qt. capacity, interlocking ears, 2 qt. lipped sauce pan, heavily tinned steel handle, 12¾ in. strainer ladle with 4¼ in. bowl, ½ pt. measuring cup, graduations stamped, 2 pie 10 in. in diam., 2 qt. coffee pot, seamless body, welded spout, ebonized wooden handle and cover knob. 1½ qt. pudding pan, ½ pt. ladle, 1 pt. combination strainer funnel. Price only **$3.76.**



50c Per Month

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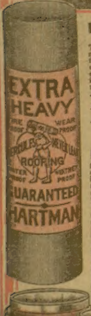

Hercules Flint Surfaced Roofing

Made of best quality, long fibre wool felt. Thoroughly saturated with pure asphalt, surfaced with very fine, sharp particles of flint crystals thoroughly imbedded under enormous pressure. The strongest, most durable prepared roofing made. Fire resisting and absolutely water proof. 108 sq. ft. to roll including nails and cement. Free samples.

No. MK156—1 ply, 55 lbs. guaranteed 5 years..............................roll **$1.15**

No. MK157—2 ply, 65 lbs. guaranteed 8 years..............................roll **$1.50**

No. MK158—3 ply, 75 lbs. guaranteed 12 years..............................roll **$1.98**

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Rex-Kote Ready Mixed House Paint. Made from finest, purest ingredients, mixed by machinery. Guaranteed against peeling, blistering, chalking or rubbing off and to cover more surface per gallon, make a better finish and last longer than any other paint. Guaranteed Rex-Kote House Paint As low as, per gal................**$1.02**

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Rex-Kote Roof Paint—made from natural asphalt, linseed oil and other ingredients that make an absolutely water tight, acid-proof paint. As low as, per gal........**52c**

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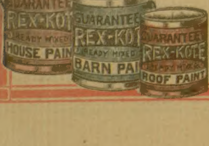

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HARTMAN FURNITURE & CARPET CO.,
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Seamless Brussels Rug Bargain

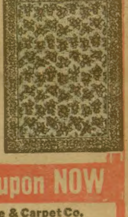
No. MK177. Magnificent, extra heavy, seamless Brussels rug in two sizes, woven of selected yarns in a very attractive pattern of semi-oriental design that will look well in any room in your home. Colorings are of Tan, Red, Green and Brown harmoniously blended. You'll be proud to own a fine Rug like this one.

Size 8 ft. 3 in. x 10 ft. 6 in.
Price..................**$12.74**

$1.00 Per Month

Size 9x12 feet.
Price. **$13.96**

$1.00 Per Month



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